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ON THE COVER

Wayne Reynolds has the dubious honor of being the most miscredited illustrator of third edition products. Rayne has had his name dropped or misplaced so many times that it's no longer funny. Mr. Raynolds' art speaks for itself, and we're glad he's still willing to work with us.

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Six Teenagers Go Camping

It's probably the characters. It might be the deaths. Either way, I don't play enough one-shot adventures.

Over Labor Day weekend last fall, my friends Andy Collins and Gwendolyn Kestrel (both designers/editors in the R&D department) opened their home to friends and colleagues from the gaming industry and ran a small convention. The weekend featured plenty of one-shots, but in my book, JD Wiker's "Six Teenagers Go Camping" stole the show and touched on all the things I love about one-shot adventures.

Anyone who's seen a horror movie knows that when teenagers go camping, most of them die. The sense of impending doom added just the right amount of tension to the game—most of us weren't going to make it through the night. To top it off, we didn't start with what you'd call stellar characters. We were no teenage version of the Green Berets. Heck, we weren't even the junior varsity football team. JD passed out the dregs that night, and we took to our roles with a disturbing zeal.

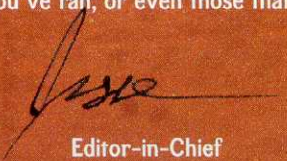
Free from the need to keep our characters alive or advance a campaign's overarching story, the five of us (Tito stayed home) reveled in the fact that no one had reasonable camping equipment (I guess Tito had the tent) or knew what to do when it started raining. When the downpour got to its worst, we headed back to the barn we passed along the way into the woods—assuming, as our characters would have, that the farmer who threatened to kill us if we didn't stay off his land wouldn't carry out his threat.

The farmhouse wasn't too far away from the barn we holed up in, and sure enough, before you could say "we're doomed," a few of us broke into the farmer's apparently abandoned house, looking for something with which to start a fire. Then we started taking stuff because, "Hey, free radio." Then the zombie attacked.

Heroic actions like hiding behind the piano kept some of us in the game, but we mostly ran or died. It was a blast. Knowing ahead of time that our characters were likely to fall to an axe-wielding psycho, a leprous clown, or an undead hockey player took the sting out of watching a character die. In the end, only one of us made it out of those woods.

Regardless of the body count, the fateful camping trip that JD ran us through did more than remind me that it's kind of fun to watch pathetic characters get mauled by undead. It reminded me how much fun playing a character laden with flaws can be, how good most roleplayers do when their parts are written out for them ahead of time, and how even a horror-movie plot can make an excellent adventure if you only do it once. Since we finished up in a tidy three-and-a-half hours, it also reminded me that you can play one-shot adventures more often than you can start a new campaign. In the twenty years I've been roleplaying, I've probably thought up a hundred reasonable campaign ideas—only a handful of which will ever be played. However, focusing on one-shot adventures makes it a lot easier to turn good game ideas into actual game sessions. Although one-shots shouldn't replace campaign gaming entirely, the next time you're planning a game session, try thinking "one-shot" rather than "epic campaign." You'll try out more ideas, get to play funnier characters, and it'll only take a few hours.

This renewed appreciation for one-shot adventures has me anxious to run a few for the rest of the staff, and I'm looking for ideas. Send a note to scalemail@wizards.com and tell us about one-shot adventures you've ran, or even those that you'd like to run someday.



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DRAGON

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Chris Thomasson
ASSISTANT EDITORS	Matthew Sernett Stacie Fiorito
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This month, our readers were equally split (and very vocal) on what content they found useful. We particulary liked the letters from readers telling us how they changed an article to make it fit their own campaigns. If you've used content from an article in an interesting and unexpected way, we want to hear from you. Drop us a postcard or an email and tell us about it.

Hai! . . . Er, Huzzah!

I just picked #289 off the stand and a big "Huzzah!" to you all. It's like you watched me run my game the past few months and wrote an issue on all the things I needed. I am currently playing a ninja "zapped" from Kara Tur to Waterdeep trying to figure out where he is and how to get back, so your ninja history lesson was right on track.

As a DM, I am currently gearing up to start an *Oriental Adventures* campaign, so #289 slipped into my hands perfectly. The article on leveling-up weapons and armor is great—a non-samurai PC can now imbue his gear as he grows. The martial arts name generator was a riot. I always wondered how they came up with those names in the Kung Fu Theatre Saturday morning movies back in the 70's—looks like they just got a hold of your generator and went back in time. I roll up a new name daily and laugh a good one.

As far as your new layout style—change is good. The colors, fonts, and art all breathe life into a magazine that should be able to get up and lay waste to the opposition. A message to all you nay-sayers out there: seppuku is always an option. *DRAGON*, keep up the good work!

Eric Brann • address withheld

Glaringly Obvious

I am writing to express my disappointment in the coverage of *Oriental Adventures.* The book is great, however the lack of a generic campaign world is a glaring omission. Why is it that the *Player's Handbook* introduces the GREYHAWK campaign world as a generic medieval fantasy world, but *Oriental Adventures* has to have *a* Rokugan flavor?

The companion *DRAGON Magazine* covers only Monks and Ninjas. Monks get enough coverage, and since ninjas are a prestige class, how about covering the shugenja, wu jen, samurai, shaman, and so on?

I like the description of historical cities that are in every issue . . . but Paris? In the issue celebrating the release of *Oriental Adventures* you couldn't find anyone willing to write up a description of Beijing or Tokyo?

Thank you James Wyatt for a great product. I hope *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON* will support *Oriental Adventures* properly from now on.

Dan Pack • Eugene, OR

The Oriental Adventures *campaign setting book explains in detail that its goal is to provide you with a set of choices for playing in either the Rokugan or Kara-Tur setting, or even a setting of your own creation. Don't feel bad though, Dan. How many of us really read those boring introductions?*

As for the "Cities of the Ages" article, we're not sure what you are talking about—we thought Paris-san fit right in with the issue's theme. Okay, okay, maybe not, but to redeem ourselves, Edo (Ancient Tokyo) is included in an upcoming issue.

Bah-Bah Black Sheep

I didn't realize the *Annual* this year would be replaced by a "d20 special." How disappointing! The first five *Annuals* were so full of thoughtful, useful, and cool ideas for D&D that I had come to look forward to them more and more each year. I am all for broadening the appeal of roleplaying in the form of the d20 system, but I am disappointed that marketing it replaced what has always been a densely packed D&D treat. The d20 issue, with its very specific adaptations to non-D&D worlds and choppy, advertisement-like feel, is clearly a black sheep among the fine *Annual* family—a major letdown that immediately becomes the least useful issue of my *DRAGON* collection.

Matt Hovde • Chicago, IL

Pick of the Litter

I was a little disappointed when I first saw the *Annual.* I was hoping both for a *DRAGON Annual* and a *d20 Special*—two magazines, not one. But I still enjoyed reading it, and I did make use of some of the articles it contained.

"First Watch" was a nice read. The article on the *Call of Cthulu* game especially piqued my interest. And I've gleaned the Steely Gaze feat for use in my own campaign.

forum

Sick of Role-ing

I would like to know how many other readers are sick of hearing that D&D is a ROLE-playing game and not a ROLL-playing game. Morgan Vergara ("Role-ing Rangers," Issue #288) seems to think that you are a "powergamer" if you actually care about numbers. She also seems to be under the impression that you have to make a weak character to properly "roleplay." I can't stand characters with no real background or personality. That makes me a "role"-player. I like to send out tough opponents against my players, and I warn them that they should think carefully about what they pick in terms of classes and feats. That makes me a "roll"-player or powergamer. How can I be both? Simple, D&D is both a ROLE-playing game and a ROLL-playing game. Gamers are not quite as one dimensional as Ms. Vergara makes them out to be.

Flavian Stellerine
Trenton, NJ

What's in a Name?

I want to thank *Dragon* for including "Dice of Fury," the name generator for martial arts moves. It was fantastic. I have just started to run a monk as a second character in our current campaign, and the name generator has added an enormous amount of flavor. I have also tried to tie as many of them as I can to a game rule or feat. Here are some of my favorites that I rolled up: sudden leopard attack (partial charge in a surprise round), spring beyond dodging dragon (tumbling in combat), winter assault (flurry of blows), six sapphire duck boxing (dealing subdual damage with unarmed attacks), four pond protection (total defense action), ivory club's ten million gauntlets crouch (colorful way to describe fighting style when outnumbered),

The information in "What the heck is a d20 system?" led me to purchase the adventure *Death in Freeport,* which I passed on to my nephew so he could DM it for our group.

A couple of the snakes from the article "Beasts of the Wheel of Time" have already shown up in one of my games. I like their venoms.

"Black Riders and Bone Horses" has some interesting ideas for undead cavalry, and the feats Airy Gallop and Spook Animals will fit nicely into my game. Maybe I'll even spook my players by throwing an undead war elephant at them sometime. Hmm, interesting image there: "We knew Hannibal had undead war elephants, we just didn't know he had the capability of launching them."

I even went out and bought some of the mini-adventures discussed by Jim Bishop in his article, "Head-to-Head: Mini Adventures." They're pretty good—lots of flaws, but nothing I haven't been able to accommodate. I'll be buying more in the future.

In the end, I don't see why anyone's disgusted by this magazine. I've actually made more use of this *Annual* than any of the previous ones!

Algolei • From the *Dragon* Message Boards

Silent Majority

Issue #290 was a great read. I found nearly all of the articles useful or easily adaptable to my campaign, and I was very happy to see the return of "Power Plays" in the Sage's column.

I like seeing historical information usable in a D&D setting, and I found that the Red Sails background was very useful. The "Life of the Party" article about running social adventures was inspiring for a different sort of adventure.

Another laurel for the "Justicar" prestige class. I liked the way it looked and was inspired immediately. This article was followed by the "Rogues Gallery" with Jus, Escalla, and crew. I loved that too, and I'm going to look for the books they appeared in.

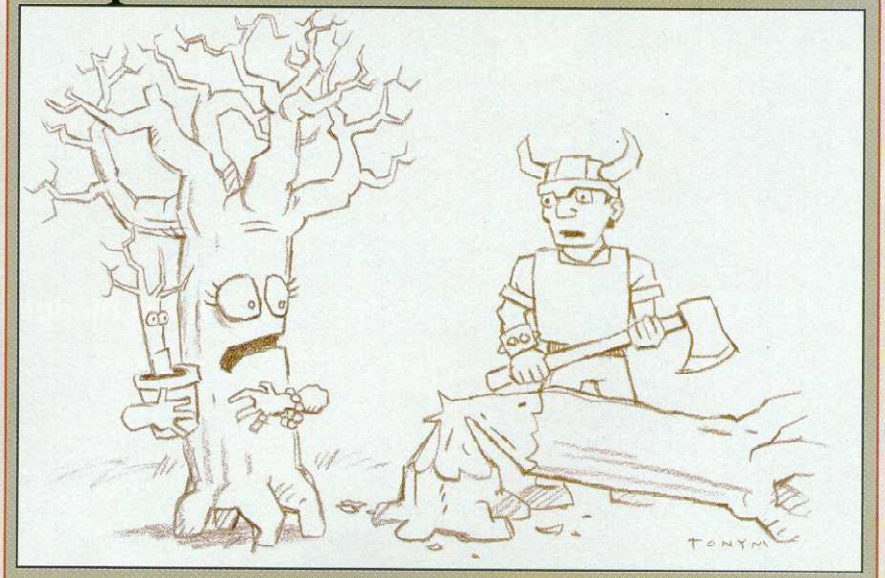
I have enjoyed *Dragon Magazine* for years, but I thought that this issue deserved a mention from a long-silent subscriber.

Eric Kohlman • Wainwright, Alberta Canada

Ego-Deflation Device

I have been playing D&D since 1983, and I have read your magazine on and off through those years. I stopped purchasing it several years ago due to its sudden lack of quality in the mid-90s. However, I just purchased *Dragon* #290

caption contest



He who laughs, lasts. **WRITE A CAPTION** and if it sends us into a fit of giggles, you'll be granted immortality. Okay, maybe not, but your name will live on within the pages of *Dragon Magazine.* Send your written caption for this cartoon to **Caption/Dragon Magazine, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057** by April 1st. There's no need to cut up your magazine. If you want to include the drawing, send in a photocopy.

sleepy silk crouch (bluffing in combat), and golden toe of the crying naga (coup de grace kick). I could go on for a while with this, but I'd love to hear what others have come up with and whether they are connecting them to game mechanics, too.

We also loved the article on super-sized monsters. Finally we can make King Kong and Godzilla-like creatures! Thank you, *Dragon*.

Mark Sims
Pittsburgh, PA

get in the ring

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and am still sorely disappointed in your magazine. I shall lay out why.

First, I know that times change, and to make sure your magazine sells, you must make it appeal to the target audience. Unfortunately, that has meant you must sacrifice quality and good taste for these garbage articles and artwork. Harsh? Yes. Perhaps I am of the old school of D&D players, those who believe in roleplaying rather than hack-and-slash and rule-mongering players who are stuck on making sure their characters acquire the most by jamming their finger on an obscure rule they found in the book and shoving it into the DM's face. D&D was founded on the concepts of having fun and enjoying the game, not whose character had the most treasure and magic and who could cheat the most to have the most powerful character.

Although that is off the subject of your magazine, it still fits into the idea of how off-track your magazine has become from what it was founded as. Indeed, times have changed, but evidently for the worse, especially in the case of *Dragon Magazine*. Granted, if I don't like it, I don't have to buy it, right? Well, I was intending on using *Dragon Magazine* ideas once more in my campaign, but not any more. I am now sorry I wasted my $5.99 for your magazine.

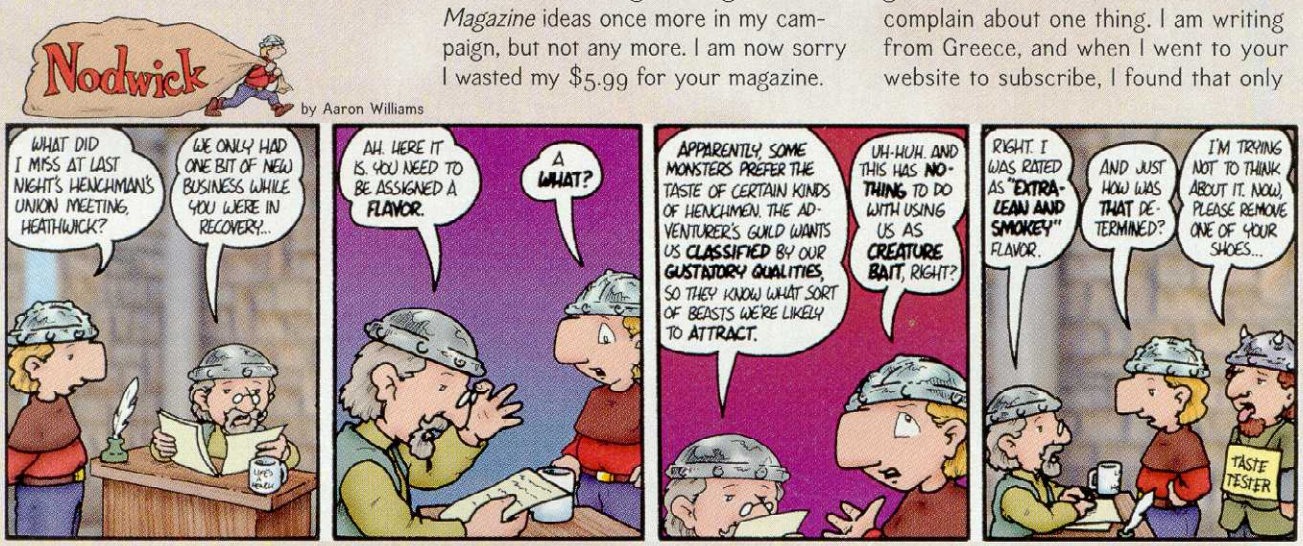
I know you have a large following, and one letter of complaint won't shoot down your egos or make your magazine suddenly file Chapter 11. I just thought it would be worth your while to know your magazine is not universally accepted among role players as once it was.

Jason J. Sitcosky • Ulster, PA

Reading Gary Gygax's "Up On a Soapbox" column for the past few issues, it's abundantly clear that D&D was originally based on the exact sort of dungeoncrawling and treasure gathering some players now despise. After all, experience was originally awarded for treasure earned. Be that as it may, the game has changed. We present articles every issue that appeal to gamers of all types, whether power gamers or "role"-players. Still, if there are specific sorts of articles you'd like to see, send us a letter—or better yet, send us an article proposal.

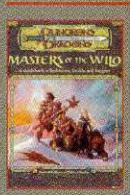
I Want My *Dragon*

I am a very enthusiastic fan of *Dragon Magazine*. Since the migration to the new edition, every issue of your magazine seems to attain a new level of greatness. However, I would like to complain about one thing. I am writing from Greece, and when I went to your website to subscribe, I found that only


Nodwick
by Aaron Williams
WHAT DID I MISS AT LAST NIGHT'S HENCHMAN'S UNION MEETING, HEATHWICK?
WE ONLY HAD ONE BIT OF NEW BUSINESS WHILE YOU WERE IN RECOVERY...
AH. HERE IT IS. YOU NEED TO BE ASSIGNED A FLAVOR.
A WHAT?
APPARENTLY, SOME MONSTERS PREFER THE TASTE OF CERTAIN KINDS OF HENCHMEN. THE ADVENTURER'S GUILD WANTS US CLASSIFIED BY OUR GUSTATORY QUALITIES, SO THEY KNOW WHAT SORT OF BEASTS WE'RE LIKELY TO ATTRACT.
UH-HUH. AND THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH USING US AS CREATURE BAIT, RIGHT?
RIGHT. I WAS RATED AS "EXTRA-LEAN AND SMOKEY" FLAVOR.
AND JUST HOW WAS THAT DETERMINED?
I'M TRYING NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT. NOW, PLEASE REMOVE ONE OF YOUR SHOES...
TASTE TESTER

D&D previews

FEBRUARY



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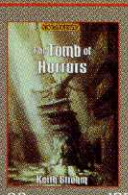

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I try to get my hands on a copy of the magazine every month, but I am not always that lucky. Please consider providing subscriptions to other countries as well.

Dimitris Stavropoulos
Address withheld

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DRAGON Magazine #293
World Building!

DRAGON Magazine #293 tackles the titanic topic of world building! Rethink religion and use diminished deities in your campaign. Create a world dominated by planetouched races. Play monster PCs with a list of their ECLs. Learn how to pick the perfect prestige classes for your campaign. Structure your campaign like your favorite TV show. Get all the tips you've missed with our giant "Dungeoncraft!"

Inside you'll also find "Class Acts," "The Bestiary," and "Elminster's Guide to the Realms." And as always, you'll find advice, tools, and tactics to improve your game!

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DUNGEON Magazine #91
Kambranex's Machinotions

by Angel Leigh McCoy and Christopher Perkins

A wizard who abandoned his body to pursue his dark experiments is still going strong. His half-machine minions now terrorize a mountain village, seeking new victims to join their ranks. A D&D adventure for 9th-level PCs.

Challenge of Champions IV

by Johnathan M. Richards

The sequel to the popular first three installments in this series features another ten challenges put forth by the Adventurer's Guild to find the best adventuring groups in the land. A D&D adventure for all levels.

Sloth

by J. Bradley Schell

When wizards get sloppy, bad things happen—especially when they're in the middle of difficult summoning rituals. A D&D adventure for 7th-level PCs.

POLYHEDRON
Pulp Heroes

Polyhedron celebrates its 150th issue with Shadowchasers, a complete **d20 System** mini-game designed by *STAR WARS Roleplaying Game* impresario Bill Slavicsek. Evil creatures from a fantastic realm dwell in the shadows, and only a secretive cabal of heroes stands in their way. Will you join the fight? Shadowchasers is your first peek at the **d20 Modern** rules currently in development by Wizards of the Coast. Plus d20 industry and RPGA Network updates and more!

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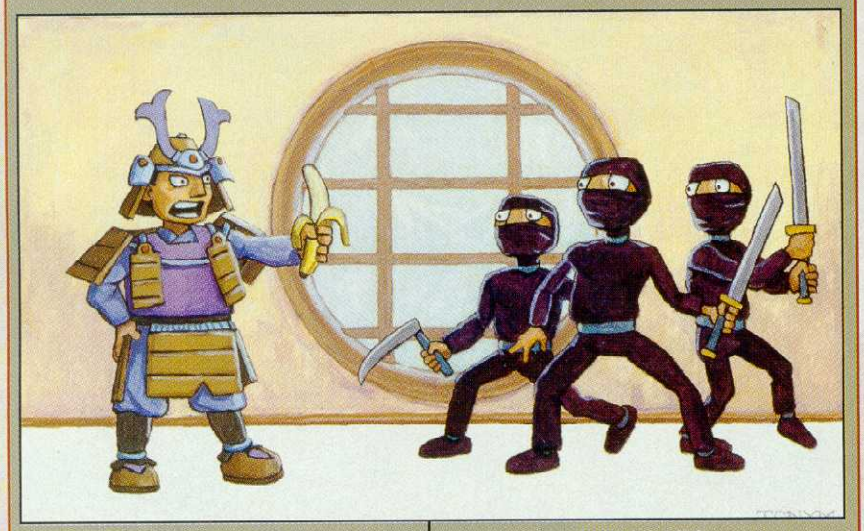


WINNER

"When I asked for warriors with 'appeal,' I meant CHARISMA!"

Congratulations S. Ashley Cook!
Valrico, FL

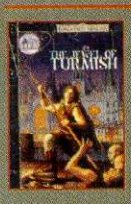
RUNNER-UPS

"I will now eat the Banana. Thus, disarming you!"
—Vincent Herrick

"You say 'katana,' I say 'banana' . . ."
—Dr. Alexander F. Simkin

D&D previews

MARCH



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Up on a Soapbox

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All I Need to Know I Learned from D&D

LESSON #6: Dungeon Hospitality

Falling for the Obvious

Thankfully, all of my playing wasn't on the DM's side of the screen. Soon after I had my campaign running, several of the players in my group created their own games. The first character I created as a player was Yrag, a fighter who, along with Terik and other PCs, engaged in many adventures.

I must preface this tale of one of Yrag's adventures with a note regarding our style of play. While we developed personalities for our characters, the main motivation for adventuring was gaining wealth, fame, and, most importantly, experience. Yrag was no exception, and he was continually venturing forth to seek such fortune.

The majority of his activity was in Rob Kuntz's campaign, and while adventuring in the upper levels of Rob's dungeons, Yrag met many strange things. However, one of the encounters that stood out the most was a not-so-simple feast.

The main challenge in Rob's dungeon was simply finding one's way through the labyrinth of passages and rooms and locating the secret doors and hidden chambers. There were plenty of dangerous, hidden encounters like pits, poisonous animals, traps firing spears and arrows, and various monsters. This might seem like standard fare now, but it was all new and exciting then. This was especially true when Yrag was alone in his explorations. With no comrades, even the bold warrior had to be ready to take flight when confronted with a potent creature or many foes. So it was with some amazement that Yrag entered a large room and saw a jolly-looking fellow at a table.

"Come! Join me!" the man called.

The board before him was groaning with roast fowl, joints of meat, flagons of wine, bumpers of ale, pies, sweetmeats, tarts . . . a feast! After that description, there was little choice for one of Yrag's stamp but to hasten to the table. But alas, hardly had he managed a handful of hasty steps before the floor gave way, and the hapless warrior plunged into a concealed pit. Fortunately, damage was scant. With spikes and hammer, the disgruntled fighter climbed out and saw the treacherous diner still there, eating and drinking with unremitting gusto.

"Have a care, else you'll miss the feast," he cried. "Still plenty for you, so come on!"

I might blame the next action on Yrag's low Intelligence score, but in truth, it was my decision. With some caution, the warrior approached, found a chair, and sat down. After a bite or two of the comestibles, washed down with potables, it was time to make a poison saving throw for the twice-duped fighter. Relief flooded over me as a 20 came up, and rage was the next emotion. Yrag drew his sword and smote the vile trickster across from him. With that blow the illusory fellow vanished, leaving the real table and rotting food before the warrior's startled gaze. Thinking to make something of this wretched encounter, Yrag began a thorough exploration of the immediate area. There was an alcove area behind the table, and into it he went. Needless to say, there was another trap waiting. Now badly wounded, Yrag kept searching, but he found nothing more. Luckily, nothing found him in the process.

Finally, more in frustration than by design, the battered fighter used his sword to cut and smash chairs and table to flinders, thinking thus no other adventurer would be duped as he had been. Lo and behold! Hidden in that board was a precious stone, a gem that enabled the creation of the illusion. Pocketing his prize, Yrag hastened to the light of the world above. In due course he sold the item for a substantial sum of gold, for such a thing was useless to him save for its value, and he was thus amply rewarded in experience for the near doom that he withstood.

The moral to this little tale is this: Failing to learn from experience is foolish, and it will get you into trouble. Now and then, though, persistence pays off.

ZŌGŌNIA
BY TONY MOSELEY
TOMORROW MORNING WE ENTER THE DUNGEON, GUYS. APPRECIATE THIS PEACEFUL NIGHT UNDER THE STARS.
PEACEFUL? HA. I WON'T RELAX UNTIL I'M IN THE DUNGEON.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, KEV?
OUT HERE WE MAY ENCOUNTER A GIGANTIC SPIDER... AN ENORMOUS DRAGON... ANY OF A MILLION THINGS BIG ENOUGH TO SWALLOW US WHOLE.
BUT THE MONSTERS INSIDE THE DUNGEON ARE ALL SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR.
HECK, THE THINGS IN THERE ARE HIDING FROM THE THINGS OUT HERE!
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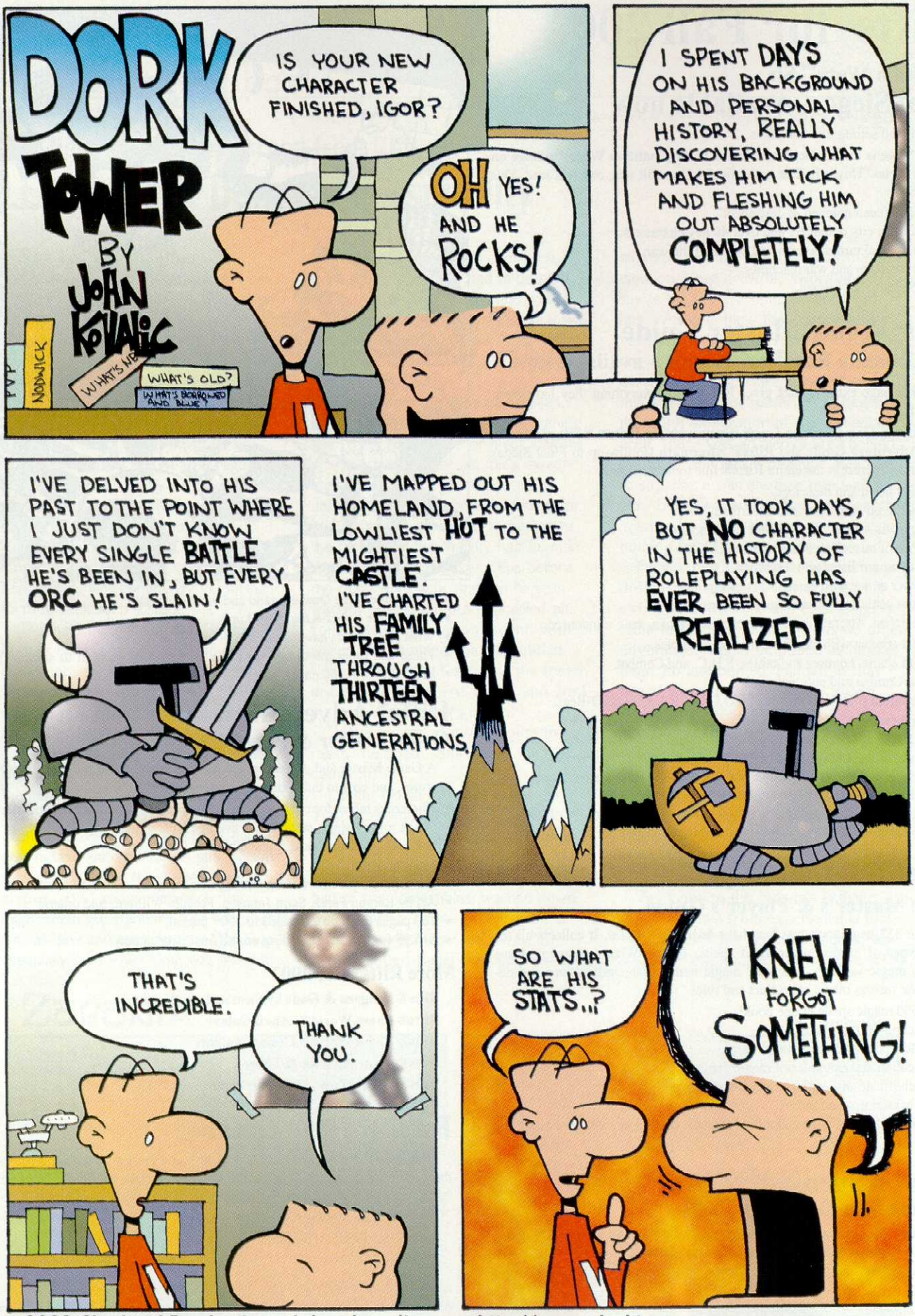
DORK TOWER
By JOHN KOVALIC
IS YOUR NEW CHARACTER FINISHED, IGOR?
OH YES! AND HE ROCKS!
I SPENT DAYS ON HIS BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL HISTORY, REALLY DISCOVERING WHAT MAKES HIM TICK AND FLESHING HIM OUT ABSOLUTELY COMPLETELY!
NODWICK
WHAT'S NEW
WHAT'S OLD?
WHAT'S BORROWED AND BLUE?
I'VE DELVED INTO HIS PAST TO THE POINT WHERE I JUST DON'T KNOW EVERY SINGLE BATTLE HE'S BEEN IN, BUT EVERY ORC HE'S SLAIN!
I'VE MAPPED OUT HIS HOMELAND, FROM THE LOWLIEST HUT TO THE MIGHTIEST CASTLE. I'VE CHARTED HIS FAMILY TREE THROUGH THIRTEEN ANCESTRAL GENERATIONS.
YES, IT TOOK DAYS, BUT NO CHARACTER IN THE HISTORY OF ROLEPLAYING HAS EVER BEEN SO FULLY REALIZED!
THAT'S INCREDIBLE.
THANK YOU.
SO WHAT ARE HIS STATS..?
I KNEW I FORGOT SOMETHING!

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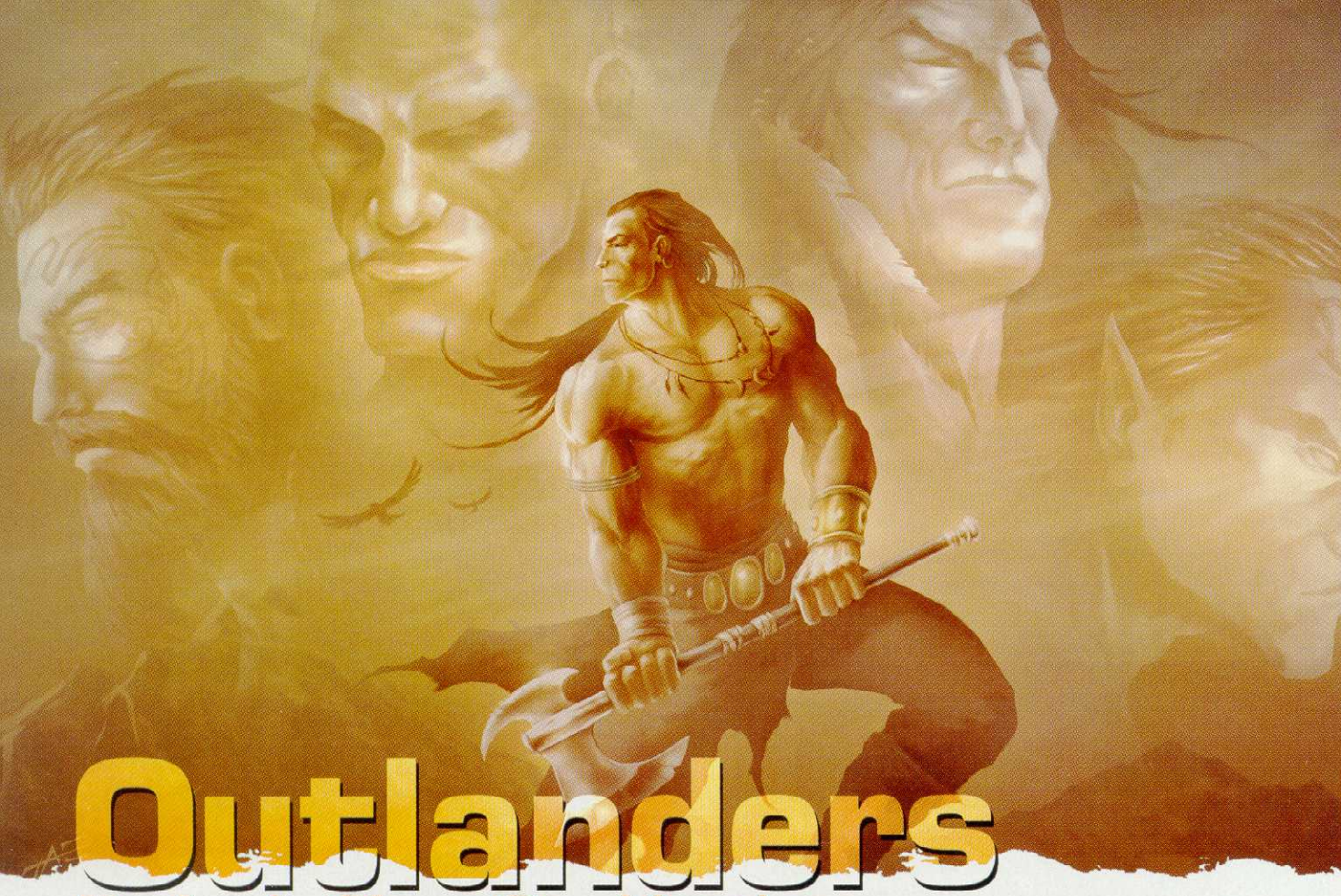


Outlanders

Barbaric Class Combinations

by Thomas MacKay and Geoffrey McVey • illustrated by Jason A. Engle

In D&D, "barbarian" can refer to two different things: the barbarian class, a warrior filled with battle-rage and skilled in wilderness survival; and barbarian cultures, societies at the fringes of civilization who are designated as "barbaric." Obviously, not every person living in a barbaric society has a d12 Hit Dice and the ability to work himself into a killing frenzy. Even within these barbaric societies, barbarians as a class are not necessarily common. Like any society, the people are varied, in both personality and talent. The people living within a barbaric society are no different. Whether you are interested in playing a barbarian or you want to create a barbaric society for your campaign world, this article offers new approaches to the class and the kinds of cultures that could produce it.

The Howlers From the Hills

When different cultures meet for the first time, they often do so with weapons drawn, and barbarians are nothing if not willing to fight. Stories brought back to the cities from these encounters often emphasize how foreign these warriors from the outlands are—they don't do battle like ordinary fighters, much less like paladins, rangers, or monks. Lightly armored, they rush across the battlefield dealing out damage as they go. They seem to have no order, no strategy, and no fear for their lives. Their rage makes them something inhuman and unstoppable.

These are the impressions held by city dwellers; barbarians think of their abilities in a wholly different manner. When in battle, they are not mindless killing machines but the embodiment of a spiritual force honored by their people. What civilized people call blood-lust or battle-rage, the barbarian understands as a primal connection to her people's past. When you are playing a barbarian, think of how your character imagines and understands that force. Below are three different sources from which your barbarian might draw her rage.

• **The Animal Inside:** Your battle-rage is that of an animal or animal spirit. The animal might embody the clan's identity, or it might simply be a specific symbol of war. As your character enters her fury, she might even take on the attributes of the animal. She might leap and pounce like a jungle cat or give a bear's roar before charging into battle.

• **Nature's Fury:** You see yourself as embodying the turmoil of the storm, the roiling strength of the sea, the harsh winds of the cold north, or the unstoppable destructiveness of a volcano. Your rage, and even the weakness that comes afterward, shows symptoms of this natural force. As a "sea barbarian," your character might froth at the mouth during her rage, but afterward seem dehydrated and languid. As a "volcanic barbarian," your character might become red and hot with fury, succumbing to a mild fever when the violence has ended.

• **Hero's Fervor:** You embody an ancient or divine figure when you rage. You draw upon ancestor-heroes from the past and become possessed by them in battle, or you are blessed by a deity who represents such prowess, and you enter a kind of ecstatic state on the battlefield. Perhaps you embody a collective

rage of your people, a rage against some injustice or crime from times past. If this is the case, you become a living instrument of vengeance or righteousness. When your character rages, all of these mythic qualities become apparent: She shouts battle-cries in a forgotten language or howls at the suffering of her people.

Life in the Outlands

The examples above assume that the abilities of the barbarian class are the defining characteristics of a barbarian culture, but there are many kinds of barbarian societies and many ways to imagine them for your game. As you go through the process of developing one of these societies, ask yourself: Where and how do they live? What roles do different character classes play in their society? And lastly, how do they perceive nonbarbarians?

Since barbarians are so closely associated with the wilds and with places that have not yet been tamed and civilized, start by imagining what effects their landscape has on them. For example, they could be:

- a marsh-dwelling tribe of barbaric halflings that survive by hunting small animals (birds, frogs, fish, and so on) and using poison gathered from the marsh to overcome larger threats.
- a human tribe herding animals between orc-infested highlands and more civilized lowlands. When in the lowlands, they raid local villages, believing the raids to be their lawful due for protecting the lowlanders from the orcs.
- an elven tribe inhabiting a vast pine forest that follows herds of deer and tames them for use in battle. These barbaric elves have never left the forest and have developed an entire cosmology around its ecosystem.

In all of the above examples, the size of the barbarian society is small; without the benefit of large-scale agriculture, they simply cannot grow to any great size. The typical group is the tribe, made up of several clans, each with its own alliances and rivalries. By taking time to consider inter-clan politics, you can create a rich source for adventure ideas and interesting background histories for player characters.

Finding your Niche

Next, consider how the various character classes act within your barbaric society. It is likely that the majority of the people belong to NPC classes. For instance, there should be more warriors than barbarians, more adepts than other kinds of spellcasters, and more commoners than any other class. If your society inhabits a particularly inhospitable terrain, adjust the skills for these NPC classes. In this case, all members of the society might have one rank of Wilderness Lore, just enough to let them forage for food and find shelter. Likewise, if it is a nomadic society, nearly all members should be able to ride a mount.

The player character classes that would thrive in barbaric societies are those with wilderness skills, such as barbarians (of course), druids, and rangers. Consider, though, the roles that other classes could play.

- **Barbarians, Fighters, and Rangers:** These classes are likely to make up the elite warriors of their community, each with their own speciality. Barbarians might be the best at close combat, while fighters, with their mastery of combat feats, could become the experts of ranged attacks. Rangers might dedicate themselves to the hunting of specific enemies and could act as their people's champions and leaders in battles against their chosen foe.
- **Bards:** In cultures where literacy is rare, bards might act as historians and legal experts, passing down their knowledge through oral tradition. Their talent for encouraging allies in combat might make them a very valued part of barbaric society.
- **Monks:** Like barbarians, monks learn to harness their inner strength to perform remarkable feats. The difference, however, is that barbarians allow themselves to be carried away by their strength, while monks strive to discipline and channel it. If you wish to integrate monks into your barbaric society, you might consider thinking of their powers as coming from a source similar to that which grants barbarians their rage, but which requires them to adopt certain taboos or ways of behaving (such as a lawful code) in order to maintain them.
- **Paladins:** Paladins are rare in barbaric cultures—chivalry and devotion to an ideal are more prevalent in settled societies than in tribes struggling for survival. Still, paladins could be seen as a particularly gifted form of bard or priest.
- **Rogues:** While there is little room in a close-knit barbaric society for professional thieves, rogues can play a number of other roles thanks to the diversity of their skills. They might be the scouts and messengers of your barbaric society, and with their stealth and sneak attack abilities, they could also make fine hunters.
- **Sorcerers and Wizards:** Needing no spellbooks, sorcerers come to their powers intuitively. The people in your barbaric society might believe sorcerers are marked for the working of magic by whatever deity or powers they believe in. Wizards, on the other hand, make use of the power of the written word in whatever form they know it. A barbarian wizard might carve her spells onto runesticks, or inscribe them on animal hides rather than write them into a spellbook. The same applies to the magic items that barbaric wizards and sorcerers create. For example, wizards might make wands from antlers, while sorcerers might fill hollowed-out eggs with their potions.

Outlander Perceptions

It is important to consider how those in your barbaric society view the civilized world. Are they in awe of cities, or do they think of them as little more than cages? Do they feel that city folk have been weakened by the luxury that settled life has brought them, or are they envious of that luxury? Since barbarian life is more focused on smaller groups (the family and the clan), it is common for barbarians to believe that their actions as an individual are more significant than their behavior within a body of laws. If they are honorable, they expect to be given respect; if they are dishonorable, they know that their fellow barbarians will hear of it quickly and treat them accordingly.

The barbarian's attachment to personal honor can cause trouble in cities. The deeds of a barbarian's ancestors and clan are meaningless in a cosmopolitan city, while his attempts to make a name for himself through demonstrations of courage and strength are easily misinterpreted by city dwellers as lawlessness and brawling. On the other hand, stories of dishonest city folk are as common among barbarians as jokes about outlander stupidity are in the cities; neither side has much reason to trust the other, which is why encounters between them can often lead to violence.

In Your Campaign

This article offers a number of tips and ideas you can use to create your own barbaric societies within your campaign. If you want to use one of the examples presented here but find that the idea doesn't quite fit into your world, just make the necessary adjustments. For example, if you like the idea of the sea wolf but want to incorporate them into an entirely barbaric society, consider creating a tribe of barbarians who live near the sea. Perhaps all of the tribe's warriors are sea wolves, or maybe only a few special members are touched by the sea gods. Here are some more examples:

- The silverhooves are a group of human marauders who use their mounted combat skills to ambush travelers passing through the forest.
- The singers of the fallen are a remote clan of dwarves who believe the spirits of their ancestors possess them during battle. These ancient spirits are the source of the clan's much-feared primal rage, and as a result, the clan views ancestor worship as an extremely important aspect of their society. Warriors often wear necklaces made from the bones of their dead heroes so that a particular spirit can find its way to a warrior's side.

The Outlander Among You

Those familiar with the fantasy genre have little trouble creating barbarian cultures on the fringes of civilization. However, a DM might also consider what possibilities exist for civilized lands to harbor and nurture "barbaric" cultures within their bounds. It is equally important to examine the possibility of people originally from civilized regions becoming barbarian characters.

One of the classic ways for a character from a civilized race or nation to become a barbarian is, of course, to spend a lot of time among barbarians. Borrowing from the Tarzan story, a new character might have been lost as a child in the wilderness but miraculously found and adopted by an outland tribe. This type of background could provide the player with the chance to choose an unusual race/class combination (such as a gnome raised by a clan of dwarf barbarians).

Experienced characters who have been living among the tribes for a while might also become influenced by the barbaric society, adopting many of the attitudes, customs, beliefs, and talents of the barbarians. In such a case, a player (with the approval of the DM) may multiclass into barbarian. The only restriction is that the character must be of non-lawful alignment. This restriction is tied to the barbarian's ability to rage; lawful characters can't let themselves go enough to fly into a rage.

Finally, for a nice twist, a DM might develop a group of barbaric characters within civilized lands, bringing the barbarians closer to home. This is a way to develop fringe societies that exist alongside even the most settled and lawful communities. In this case, DMs should consider how society might identify and view people who demonstrate this wild, "barbaric" demeanor. How do their barbaric talents come about? Do the talents manifest at a young age, or do they require special training? What role might such ferocious, free-spirited warriors play in a lawful society? Here are two examples of barbarian characters who live within a civilized society:

- The Sea Wolves: Some children have a primal bond with the sea. These children are difficult to raise—when not staring off toward the waves or displaying a terrifying temper, they are constantly running away from home and to the shore. This is not an affliction, but a blessing. Such children have been touched by the sea gods and are eventually sent to the gods' temples. There, the children develop their talents and eventually serve as an elite force of sailors. The "sea wolves," as they are called, are "barbarians" by virtue of their special nature. While they remain on the periphery of society—patrolling at sea or lodged with their comrades in seashore barracks—they are admired by the people as protectors who are blessed with the sea's strength and fury.
- Singers of the Fallen: Within a particular society or nation, it is a child's duty to spend several months tending to the family shrine, which is dedicated to countless ancestors. From time to time, however, a child finds that he hears the voices of the dead and, worse, the angry voices of those who fell in battle. These children become the "singers of the fallen" and live a life drawn to battle, believing that doing so might bring peace to the restless ghosts of war. Singers are usually loners, although they've been known to travel in small groups. (Singers of the fallen follow the skald's progression chart given in "Class Combos" from *Dragon Annual* #5.)

Both of these examples offer a way of including the barbarian class within a nonbarbaric society. The barbarian (sea wolf or singer of the fallen) is not integrated into the civilized society fully, which reflects the fact that a barbarian, however respected, cannot express his talents freely in a lawful society. Their society tolerates them because there is a religious or cultural understanding of why the barbarians behave differently—their talents and behavior are a gift of the gods or a curse they must bear.

Even when a civilized society tolerates barbarians, it is a tense and fragile relationship. If a situation were to occur causing the barbarians to be viewed with more suspicion or fear, their marginal role in society might be lost, and they might find themselves subjugated or perhaps even expelled. Under these conditions, the barbarians would become traditional barbarians again: excluded from civilized society and required to live on the fringes of civilization.

Restless Freedom

There is a certain undeniable fun in playing the stereotypical barbarian, a character whose life is centered entirely around fighting. At the very least, it makes it easier for players to come up with a response to encounters. Even when not in combat, a barbarian has an excuse for simple, direct behavior that her more civilized companions can't share. It can be very liberating for a player not to have worry about what her character says and instead act according to her impulses. This behavior can also cause problems, though, especially if the rest of the party is trying to be cautious or delicate. If barbarians have an ongoing struggle, it is to preserve their outlander identity without alienating their adventuring friends.

Sea Wolf

Sea wolves are a combination of barbarian and rogue. They begin as barbarians, as the gift of the wild sea manifests itself in the sea wolves' toughness, cunning, and remarkable ferocity. Their training, which takes place at sea, incorporates the many rogue skills and class abilities to represent the agile, intuitive ways of the sailor.

COMPARED TO SINGLE-CLASS ROGUE

ADVANTAGES

- Significantly better hit points
- Proficient with medium armor
- Proficient with all simple and martial weapons
- Access to barbarian's rage ability

DISADVANTAGES

- Slower access to rogue class skills
- No access to rogue's high-level special abilities

Character Choices

Barbarians and rogues share the uncanny dodge special abilities as well as a number of skills. This allows them to utilize their skills points to continue advancing in their important skills. They tend to focus on skills such as Balance, Climb, Profession (Sailor), Spot, Swim, and Use Rope, as these are helpful for a life at sea.

Sea wolves generally focus on combat-oriented feats that highlight the strength and ferocity of their nature. Their recommended feats are shown in the level progression chart below.

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. save	Ref. save	Will save	Average hp	Abilities gained and recommended feat
1	Bbn1	+1	+2	+0	+0	12	Rage 1/day; fast movement, feat (endurance)
2	Bbn1/Rog1	+1	+2	+2	+0	16	Sneak attack +1d6
3	Bbn2/Rog1	+2	+3	+2	+0	22	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, feat (improved initiative)
4	Bbn2/Rog2	+3	+3	+3	+0	26	Evasion, ability increase
5	Bbn3/Rog2	+4 +3	+4	+1	32		
6	Bbn3/Rog3	+5	+4	+4	+2	36	Sneak attack +2d6, feat (power attack)
7	Bbn4/Rog3	+6/+1	+5	+4	+2	42	Rage 2/day
8	Bbn4/Rog4	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	46	Ability increase
9	Bbn5/Rog4	+8/+3	+5	+5	+2	52	Uncanny dodge, (can't be flanked) feat (cleave)
10	Bbn5/Rog5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+2	56	Sneak attack +3d6
11	Bbn6/Rog5	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	62	
12	Bbn6/Rog6	+10/+5	+7	+7	+4	66	Feat (great cleave), ability increase
13	Bbn7/Rog6	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+4	72	
14	Bbn7/Rog7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+4	76	Sneak attack +4d6
15	Bbn8/Rog7	+13/+8/+3	+8	+7	+4	82	Rage 3/day, feat (combat reflexes)
16	Bbn8/Rog8	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+4	86	Ability increase
17	Bbn9/Rog8	+15/+10/+5	+8	+9	+5	92	
18	Bbn9/Rog9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+6	96	Sneak attack +5d6, feat (improved bull rush)
19	Bbn10/Rog9	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+9	+6	102	Uncanny dodge (+1 against traps)
20	Bbn10/Rog10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+6	106	Special rogue ability, ability increase

Silverhoof

The silverhoof (barbarian/ranger) is a barbaric warrior, a member of his tribe's elite cavalry whose duty it is to patrol the forests and quickly strike against intruders. Becoming a silverhoof is considered an honor. It is not itself a prestige class, but rather, the title given to those defenders of the tribe who have shown a particular affinity for fierce mounted combat.

The silverhoof's ranger levels give him access to a number of skills and spells he can use to survive in the wilderness and track foes, while his barbarian levels make him a fierce warrior. A silverhoof advances levels in his two classes evenly.

COMPARED TO SINGLE-CLASS BARBARIAN

ADVANTAGES

- Access to ranger spells and class skills
- Don't have to spend skill points to read and write languages
- Better Fortitude saves

DISADVANTAGES

- No access to barbarian's high level abilities
- Less hit points

Character Choices

Silverhooves focus on skills that maximize their riding and hunting ability, primarily Handle Animal, Intuit Direction, Jump, Listen, Ride, and Wilderness Lore, which are class skills for both the ranger and the barbarian. When gaining ranger levels, silverhooves also buy a few ranks of Move Silently, Spot, and Hide.

Silverhooves acquire Mounted Combat and its related feats as soon as possible, improving their ability to make hit-and-run attacks against their enemies. Their recommended feats are shown in the level progression chart below. D

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. save	Ref. save	Will save	Average hp	Abilities gained and recommended feats
1	Rgr 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Track, 1st favored enemy, feat (mounted combat)
2	Rgr 1/Bbn 1	+2	+4	+0	+0	16	Rage 1/day, fast movement
3	Rgr 1/Bbn 2	+3	+5	+0	+0	22	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), feat (mounted archery)
4	Rgr 2/Bbn 2	+4	+6	+0	+0	27	Ability increase
5	Rgr 3/Bbn 2	+5	+6	+1	+1	32	
6	Rgr 3/Bbn 3	+6/+1	+6	+2	+2	38	Feat (point-blank shot)
7	Rgr 4/Bbn 3	+7/+2	+7	+2	+2	43	1st-level spells
8	Rgr 4/Bbn 4	+8/+3	+8	+2	+2	49	Rage 2/day, ability increase
9	Rgr 5/Bbn 4	+9/+4	+8	+2	+2	54	2nd favored enemy, feat (ride-by attack)
10	Rgr 5/Bbn 5	+10/+5	+8	+2	+2	60	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
11	Rgr 5/Bbn 6	+11/+6/+1	+9	+3	+3	66	
12	Rgr 6/Bbn 6	+12/+7/+2	+10	+4	+4	71	Ability increase, feat (rapid shot)
13	Rgr 7/Bbn 6	+13/+8/+3	+10	+4	+4	76	
14	Rgr 7/Bbn 7	+14/+9/+4+10	+4	+4	82		
15	Rgr 8/Bbn 7	+15/+10/+5+11	+4	+4	8	7	2nd-level spells, feat (spirited charge)
16	Rgr 8/Bbn 8	+16/+11/+6/+1	+12	+4	+4	93	Rage 3/day, ability increase
17	Rgr 9/Bbn 8	+17/+12/+7/+2	+12	+5	+5	98	
18	Rgr 9/Bbn 9	+18/+13/+8/+3	+12	+6	+6	104	Feat (power attack)
19	Rgr 10/Bbn 9	+19/+14/+9/+4	+13	+6	+6	109	3rd favored enemy
20	Rgr 10/Bbn 10	+20/+15/+10/+5	+14	+6	+6	115	Uncanny dodge (+1 against traps), ability increase

Lords of the Lost Vale

Four New PC Races

by Sean K Reynolds
illustrated by Anthony Watters

Somewhere near the Dalelands of Faerûn exists a colony of intelligent reptilian creatures said to be from another world and championed by a great paladin hero who travels with a strange bard. Many have heard tales of these "dragonmen," but few have seen them. The stories tell of the Lost Vale, a place where these dragonmen have a village and farm and craft just as human folk do, yet some of the dragonmen are as big as ogres and some of the little ones can fly.

These stories are true, and they describe the saurials, a race of intelligent reptilian humanoids stranded in Faerûn by the actions of an evil deity. More intelligent than lizardfolk and inclined to be peaceful and civilized, the saurials have maintained their isolated community for nearly 15 years, allowing few visitors and only leaving to protect their homes or acquire needed goods they cannot make themselves. That might change in the next year however, as the first generation of saurials born in Faerûn reach maturity and become curious about the rest of the world. Saurial elders caution the young ones against reckless wandering, for they know the people in the outside world often fear the unfamiliar and might take offense to a talking six-foot-tall reptile, but the saurials are not a timid people, and these cautions cannot dim the spark of life and independence that has allowed these creatures to survive and thrive despite their former enslavement by the embodiment of corruption itself.

	BLADEBACK Medium-Size Humanoid (Reptilian)	FINHEAD Medium-Size Humanoid (Reptilian)	FLYER Small Humanoid (Reptilian)	HORNHEAD Large Humanoid (Reptilian)
Hit Dice:	2d8 (9 hp)	2d8 (9 hp)	2d8-2 (7 hp)	2d8 (9 hp)
Initiative:	+0	+1 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)	+0
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.	20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)	30 ft.
AC:	14 (+4 natural)	15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)	16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)	14 (-1 size, +5 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +2 melee, tail -3 melee	2 claws +1 melee, tail -4 melee	2 claws +2 melee, tail -3 melee	2 claws +1 melee, tail -4 melee
Damage:	Claws 1d4+1, tail 1d3	Claws 1d4, tail 1d3	Claws 1d3, tail 1d2	Claws 1d4+1, tail 1d4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—	—	—	Tail reach
Special Qualities:	Saurial qualities	Saurial qualities	Saurial qualities	Saurial qualities
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +2	Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort -1, Ref +5, Will +0	Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 12	Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 10	Str 11, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 13, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills:	Craft (any) +2, Diplomacy +4, Jump +3	Balance +3, Craft (any) +2, Jump +3, Listen +3, Spot +3	Balance +4, Craft (any) +2, Gather Information +2, Hide +6	Craft (blacksmithing or weaponsmithing) +3, Jump +4, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +3
Feats:	Iron Will	Alertness	Flyby Attack	Power Attack
Climate/Terrain:	Temperate and warm forest	Temperate and warm forest	Temperate and warm forest	Temperate and warm forest
Organization:	Pack (2-5) or tribe (5-30)	Pack (2-5) or tribe (5-30)	Pack (2-5) or tribe (5-30)	Pack (2-5) or tribe (5-30)
Challenge Rating:	1	1	1	1
Treasure:	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard
Alignment:	Usually neutral good	Usually neutral good	Usually neutral good	Usually neutral good
Advancement Range:	By character class	By character class	By character class	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+2	+2	+3	+2

Saurials are intelligent bipedal reptiles brought to Faerûn as slaves by the evil god Moander. With the death of that deity, they struggle to survive in a strange new world.

Saurials are community-minded beings from another Material Plane. Kidnapped from their homes by Moander, they were transported to a place in the Dalelands called the Lost Vale. They worked for him as slaves, corrupting and destroying the plants and creatures of the Lost Vale to suit his evil purposes. Eventually the saurials were freed when Moander was slain by the actions of a former Harper named Finder Wyvernspur (who absorbed Moander's divine energy and became a deity), a saurial paladin known as Dragonbait, and a female adventurer named Alias. Elminster suggested that the saurials remain in the Lost Vale and work to repair the damage they had caused, and they have done so, using this time to recover physically and spiritually from the treatment they suffered as slaves to Moander's will.

The Lost Vale Tribe (as they call themselves) originally numbered 110 saurials, all of whom were adults (Moander slew the young of the tribe). In the years since their release, they have had many hatchings, and the tribe now numbers 485 individuals, with 104 of the original inhabitants surviving. The leader of the tribe is Grypht (NG hornhead saurial Wiz15), who has three apprentices (NG saurials Wiz3). The spiritual leaders of the community are Sweetleaf (NG bladeback saurial Clr9 of Chauntea) and Copperbloom (CG finhead saurial Clr5 of Finder Wyvernspur) and their eight acolytes (NG or CG saurials Clr2 of Chauntea or Finder Wyvernspur).

Saurials come in many varieties, although only four are known to be in the world of Toril. They are close to the size of a human in most cases, and most have tails and clawed hands. Most saurials are green in color with patterns of yellow scales on their backs. Very rarely a pure white saurial is hatched, but there is no stigma or omen associated with this.

COMBAT

Most saurials are uncomfortable in armor, preferring the natural protection of their scales, and they usually wear little more than a loincloth and a simple loose cloak. They do not suffer any additional penalties for wearing armor, assuming that it has been modified to accommodate a tail. Most saurials are noncombatants and fight with their natural weapons if pressed. Some saurials (such as saurial adventurers) are familiar with the use of weapons. Saurial weapons tend to have shorter hilts and barbed tips, although these do not affect the abilities of the weapon. Saurials work together and coordinate attacks, although they usually do not plan strategies ahead of time unless facing an enemy they have fought before. The statistics presented above reflect a typical saurial without character levels.

Saurial Qualities

Cold Torpor (Ex): Saurials are warm-blooded creatures, but they retain heat poorly in cold environments. A saurial suffers a -5 penalty to Fortitude saving throws made to avoid subdual damage from cold environments and takes double the normal amount of subdual damage for failing those saving throws.

In cooler climates, saurials bundle up to keep warm, for they can easily die from exposure in an environment that a human would find merely uncomfortable.

Protection From Sonic Attacks (Ex): A saurial's earholes are well protected, giving it a +4 circumstance bonus to saving throws against sonic effects and attacks.

Scent (Ex): Saurials have the scent special quality, as described in the *Monster Manual*.

Vulnerability To Gas Attacks (Ex): A saurial's metabolism and reliance on scent makes it vulnerable to attacks conveyed through gas, including *stinking cloud, cloudkill*, and poisonous

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

You don't need to play in a Forgotten Realms campaign to use saurials. You can import saurials into your campaign in a variety of ways:

- The saurials appeared in your campaign world in much the same fashion presented here, but they freed themselves from slavery, and the PCs are the first to discover the enigmatic race.
- Saurials are invaders from another time or plane. The flyers act as scouts, while the bladebacks and finheads form squads of brute warriors and elite strike forces. Lead by a cabal of hornheads, the saurials are bent on conquering some warm and marshy land.
- Saurials have always existed on your world, but they were never known until recently when the depths of a huge jungle were penetrated or a new continent was discovered (perhaps by the PCs).
- The saurials were accidentally created by a crazed druid intent on bringing a long extinct species (dinosaurs) back to life.
- The saurials are an evolved form of lizardfolk. Perhaps they are worshiped by the lizardfolk mentioned in the In Your Campaign sidebar in "Rune Skulls of the Abbor-Alz."
- The subraces of saurials, lizardfolk, and troglodytes are all separate civilized species like dwarves, gnomes, elves, and so on.

gas. Saurials suffer a -4 penalty to saving throws against gas-based effects and attacks.

Hornhead

Tail Reach (Ex): Hornhead saurials can attack targets up to 10 ft. away with their tail as if they had 10 ft. reach.

SAURIALS AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Saurials are a peaceful and contemplative race. Although they are trying to expand their numbers, they have no desire to conquer new lands or greatly influence the world around them. Of course, individual saurials vary, and many young saurials are curious about the world they now reside in. Some of the first-generation saurials born in the Lost Vale are about to reach adulthood, and it is likely that some will choose to explore the world around them. Their community ties make them comfortable in a group of adventurers; rarely does a saurial travel alone, especially if it cannot communicate with other creatures.

Relations: Saurials are generally nonaggressive and content to be left alone with their own kind. They have had little contact with other races and are wary of them. They know that other creatures in Faerûn find their appearance frightening, and they often go to great lengths to remain hidden or disguise themselves when other sentient races are nearby.

Saurials get along with open-minded people and those that respect nature. As they have remained isolated from the other communities in the Dales, a visiting saurial is likely to react with surprise at the many shapes and colors of the other people of the world. Initial impressions of these people are likely to color the saurial's perception of that race as a whole (finheads in particular tend to act this way).

Saurials mate for life, and if times are good, the pair can produce 1-2 eggs per year. They share the duties of protecting the eggs and caring for and training the young. Hatchlings grow as large as adults within 5 years but require another 10-15 years to reach the maturity level of an adult. Saurials have the same life expectancy and age categories as dwarves.

Alignment: Saurials are good-natured and have an instinctive feel for how they fit into their own community. At the same time, they believe in the rights of individuals to seek out and learn what they want where they want (possibly a form of rebellion against Moander's slavery). Together these two factors make them favor good over evil. Lawful saurials tend to be exceedingly protective, while chaotic ones tend to be more aggressive. They value a balanced outlook of how good aims should be achieved and how creatures should live their lives, preferring that personal freedoms share space with the will of the majority. Their leaders are usually wise saurials with good judgement who embody this ideal.

Saurial Lands: Saurials organize themselves into villages, with each individual learning a skill that suits them, such as blacksmithing, weaving, farming, hunting, carpentry, masonry, and so on. They build stone dwellings, each of which houses a single family, although they have been known to live in thatched huts if material or time is in short supply.

Saurial communities usually have members of more than one subrace, and they treat each other as equals, seeing their fellow villagers primarily as saurials and only secondarily as a subrace, with each person having something valuable to contribute to the community. Members of different subraces cannot crossbreed, so a saurial house normally consists of creatures of the same subrace. Finheads are the most common type of saurial, with bladebacks and hornheads in smaller numbers because they consume more food and deliberately keep their numbers low to prevent depleting the village's resources.

Religion: Saurials are a spiritual people, and in Faerûn most of them venerate Finder Wyvernspur. In their home world they worship other deities but have converted to the worship of equivalent deities in Faerûn. Of particular importance in saurial society is the soul singer, a type of bard preferring divination spells and thought to have a spiritual connection to the health of the tribe. The Lost Vale tribe has had an unprecedented seven soul singers hatched since their freedom from slavery.

Language: Saurials speak Draconic, but their voices are naturally pitched too high for humanoids to hear, and they punctuate their speech with scents that define emotions. Dragons and fey can hear saurial voices (although fey don't necessarily understand Draconic) and generally understand the scent cues regardless of the vocal content of the message. Other creatures can interpret some of the common stronger scents to understand the creature's mood: brimstone means confusion, roses mean sadness, lemons mean pleasure or joy, baked bread means anger, violets mean danger or fear, honeysuckle means tenderness,

woodsmoke means devotion or piety, tar means victory, and ham means nervousness or worry.

Because of the pitch difference, humanoids and most other creatures have difficulty understanding saurials. Creatures that speak Draconic can be understood by saurials, although their speech seems dull and tired compared to that of a saurial. Saurials can learn to speak languages normally (including Draconic) if they study them, although few have learned to do so. Because of the difficulty of learning the "deep tongues," saurials cannot speak the bonus languages they select (but they can understand them) unless they devote skill points to learn the languages. Saurials carve lines on sticks for written records, which are normally only used for magical writing or recording important events.

Names: Saurial names are a combination of words in Draconic and scents. The Common names for individual saurials and the names of the subraces used among the other races are either nicknames or loose translations of their saurial name. Parents tend to choose names after physical objects or concepts rather than abstract names with no meaning. Saurials usually use the name their parents gave them among their own kind but are comfortable using an "adopted" name among other creatures that cannot speak Draconic, although they try to find a name with a similar meaning to their saurial name.

Subraces: As a whole, saurial society works the same regardless of the majority subrace in a village. Subraces differ from each other primarily in appearance and in personal outlook. The following are the only types known to live in Faerûn, although it is possible that others might come through a portal now that a connection has been made to their home world.

BLADEBACKS

Personality: Bladebacks are very social and mix well with all kinds of saurials. They are the most straightforward and trusting of their kind. They work hard to understand the motives of others and are slow to forget slights and offenses. Slow to anger, they are passionate fires once pushed to the point of aggression. Bladebacks often become village leaders or advisors to those leaders.

Physical Description: Taller and stockier than a human, a bladeback is built much like a half-orc. Each has a series of large sharp scales running down its spine from its head to the tip of its tail. Its tail is about as long as its body.

Adventurers: Like most saurials, bladeback adventurers are usually motivated by curiosity about the world around them. Their trusting and open natures often get bladebacks into trouble that they must use their muscle to escape.

Bladeback Racial Traits

- +2 Strength, +2 Charisma: Bladebacks are naturally strong and outgoing.
- Medium-size: As Medium-size creatures, bladebacks have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Bladeback base speed is 30 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Bladebacks can see twice as far in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Favored Class: Cleric. Bladebacks are natural diplomats and have an innate spiritual talent.
- Automatic Languages: Draconic. Bonus Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan, and Celestial. Saurials have difficulty with other languages and

MULTIPLE NATURAL ATTACKS

Sometimes a creature (such as a saurial) has multiple natural attacks. The creature's primary attack (2 claw attacks, in the case of a saurial) enjoys the creature's full attack bonus and applies the creature's full Strength bonus to damage.

All of the creature's other natural attacks are secondary attacks and have a -5 penalty to the attack bonus and apply only one half the creature's Strength bonus to damage. (In the case of a saurial, these penalties apply to its tail attack.)

Should a creature with multiple natural attacks use a weapon, the weapon is always considered the creature's primary attack. All other natural attacks suffer the -5 penalty to hit and add only half the creature's Strength bonus to damage, regardless of whether or not the other attacks were originally designated as primary or secondary. Thus, a saurial wielding a weapon in one hand would attack with its full attack bonus to hit and its full Strength bonus to damage with the weapon. It also could attack with its other claw or its tail or both its other claw and its tail—all those attacks would be made with a -5 penalty and add only half the saurial's Strength bonus to damage.

A creature with multiple natural attacks that only makes one of those attacks in a round makes that attack at its listed attack bonus and with a bonus to damage equal to one and a half times its Strength bonus. An attack originally designated as secondary still suffers a -5 penalty to hit.

Saurials and other creatures with multiple attacks can take the Multiattack feat, reducing the penalty to hit with secondary natural attacks from -5 to -2. This does not change the fact that such secondary natural attacks add only half the creature's Strength bonus to damage. Also, a creature with the Weapon Finesse feat can use its Dexterity modifier on all its natural melee attacks.

There are some exceptions to these rules: The most obvious is that player character races without natural attacks follow the rules for off-hand attacks, but also some monsters, such as dragons, follow different conventions. You can easily tell the difference by looking at a creature's description in the *Monster Manual*. If it lists only weapon attacks, it follows the rules for off-hand attacks when making multiple attacks without a weapon (unless the creature is also a monk). If it has any non-weapon melee attacks, it follows the off-hand rules for using multiple weapons, but it follows the multiple natural attack rules whenever it uses the listed natural attacks. Creatures never get iterative attacks with natural weapons.

although they can understand and read all the bonus languages they know, they cannot speak them without spending skill points.

- Natural Armor: A bladeback has +4 natural armor.
- Natural Attacks: Bladebacks can make two claw attacks and one tail attack. Claw attacks deal 1d4 points of damage plus Strength modifier; a tail attack deals 1d3 hit points of damage plus Strength penalty or one-half Strength bonus. See the Multiple Natural Attacks sidebar for more details.
- Saurial Qualities: Bladebacks have the cold torpor, protection from sonic attacks, vulnerability to gas attacks, and scent special qualities as described above.
- Base Hit Dice: Bladebacks have 2d8 Hit Dice in addition to hit dice from their character levels. These hit dice give them a starting base attack bonus of +1, a Reflex save bonus of +3, 7 skill points (class skills for these skill points are Craft, Diplomacy, and Jump), and 1 feat (usually spent on Iron Will).
- Level Adjustment: +2. Bladebacks are more powerful and gain levels more slowly than the races in the *Player's Handbook*. See the Powerful Races sidebar.

FINHEADS

Personality: Alert, bright, active, curious, and emotional, finheads are good with their hands and willing to do hard work and even soldiering. They tend to believe in ultimate concepts of good, evil, and truth, and they see the world in terms of black and white.

Physical Description: Finheads are very close in shape and proportions to humans; although they are slightly shorter than a typical human. A finhead's tail is just over half its body length, and it has a pronounced fin on its head.

Adventurers: Finheads are enthusiastic about new tasks and adventures, and

POWERFUL RACES

Saurials are significantly more powerful than the races in the *Player's Handbook*. To maintain the balance of power between player characters, adjustments have to be made to characters of these races so that the game remains fair and enjoyable for all involved.

All saurials have a racial trait called "Level Adjustment," which is either +2 or +3. When creating a character of this race, add the level adjustment to the class levels of the creature. This determines their character level and decides how many experience points the character needs to gain a class level (see below) and how much gear the character should have (according to Table 2-24: Starting Equipment for PCs Above 1st Level in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The character level is also used to determine if a character of this race is appropriate to join an existing party. For example, if the DM would not allow a 3rd-level character to join a group of 2nd-level adventurers, a saurial with a level adjustment of +2 and a class level should not be allowed either.

Saurials use the normal experience chart according to their character level. They can also use an adjusted XP chart based on their level adjustment. The end result is the same. For example, Greenscales the 1st-level finhead paladin (level adjustment +2) has a character level of 3. Normally a 1st-level character begins play with 0 XP and needs to reach 1,000 XP to reach 2nd level, but because Greenscales's character level is 3, he starts with 3,000 XP (just like a 3rd-level character) and needs to reach 6,000 XP to reach 2nd level (level adjustment +2 + 2 = 4), just like a 3rd-level character on the way to 4th level. Greenscales would pick up a third character level at 10,000 XP (level adjustment +3 + 2 = 5), a fourth at 15,000 XP (level adjustment +4 + 2 = 6), and so on—always two levels behind a human with the same XP total.

This system allows a DM to give players a set XP total for their characters, and they can build characters with any race and class combination and still be about the same power level despite the overall differences between powerful and standard races. For example, a DM could give each player 10,000 experience points to build a character. Jesse makes a 3rd-level flyer rogue (character level 5), Matthew makes a 4th-level bladeback cleric (character level 5), and Erik makes a 5th-level human cleric.

When considering making a character of these races, ask yourself: Is the initial jump in power worth the long-term decrease in the speed your character gains levels?

Essentially, your character needs your character level x 1000 to reach the next level. This adjustment is summarized in the table below.

LEVEL ADJUSTED EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

Level	Normal XP	LA+2 XP	LA+3
1	0	3,000	6,000
2	1,000	6,000	10,000
3	3,000	10,000	15,000
4	6,000	15,000	21,000
5	10,000	21,000	28,000
6	15,000	28,000	36,000
7	21,000	36,000	45,000
8	28,000	45,000	55,000
9	36,000	55,000	66,000
10	45,000	66,000	78,000
11	55,000	78,000	91,000
12	66,000	91,000	105,000
13	78,000	105,000	120,000
14	91,000	120,000	136,000
15	105,000	136,000	153,000
16	120,000	153,000	171,000
17	136,000	171,000	190,000
18	153,000	190,000	210,000
19	171,000	210,000	231,000
20	190,000	231,000	253,000

they often leap into dangerous situations before fully understanding what is going on. Even so, finheads are perceptive and think quickly on their feet, allowing them to assess situations within moments of their arrival.

Finhead Racial Traits

- +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom: Finheads have good reflexes and insight.
- Medium-size: As Medium-size creatures, finheads have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Finhead base speed is 30 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Finheads can see twice as far in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Favored Class: Paladin. Finheads have a natural zeal and a strong sense of what is good and evil.
- Automatic Languages: Draconic. Bonus Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan, and Celestial. Saurials have difficulty with other languages, and although they can understand and read all the bonus languages they know, they cannot speak them without spending skill points.
- Natural Armor: A finhead has +4 natural armor.
- Natural Attacks: Finheads can make two claw attacks and one tail attack. Claw attacks deal 1d4 points of damage plus Strength modifier; a tail attack deals 1d3 hit points of damage plus Strength penalty or one-half Strength bonus. See the Multiple Natural Attacks sidebar for more details.
- Saurial Qualities: Finheads have the cold torpor, protection from sonic attacks, vulnerability to gas attacks, and scent special qualities as described above.
- Base Hit Dice: Finheads have 2d8 hit dice in addition to Hit Dice from their character levels. These hit dice give them a starting base attack bonus of +1, a Reflex save bonus of +3, 7 skill points (class skills for these skill points are Balance, Craft, and Jump), and 1 feat (usually spent on Alertness).
- Level Adjustment: +2. Finheads are more powerful and gain levels more slowly than the races in the *Player's Handbook*. See the Powerful Races sidebar.

FLYERS

Personality: Flyers are the most nervous and noisy of the saurials, irritable and often irritating to others. They are more likely to flee than to fight if threatened. They love gossip and like to spend time with people interested in listening to them.

Physical Description: A flyer is a small variety of saurial, proportioned similar to a halfling. It has a short tail and a flap of scaly skin beneath each of its arms, allowing it to fly. These primitive wings stretch from a flyer's wrist to its waist, making it difficult for a flyer to wear normal clothing, armor, or even a backpack without modifications. Flyers sometimes have an area of bold red scales around the neck.

Adventurers: Flyers usually act as scouts and messengers in a saurial community, although the saurials' history notes several important heroes who were flyers. Flyers that become adventurers often do so by accident or out of necessity as their role in saurial society often puts them in harm's way.

Flyer Racial Traits

- +4 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, -2 Charisma: Flyers are graceful flyers, but they are weak and often irritating.
- Small: As Small creatures, flyers gain a +1 size bonus to Armor Class, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, and a +4 size bonus on Hide checks, but they must use smaller weapons than humans use, and their lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of Medium-size characters.
- Flyer base speed is 20 feet. Flyers can fly at a speed of 50 feet with average maneuverability.
- Low-light Vision: Flyers can see twice as far in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Favored Class: Rogue. Flyers have had to rely on skill and guile to make up for their physical weaknesses compared to other creatures.
- Automatic Languages: Draconic.

Bonus Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan, and Celestial. Saurials have difficulty with other languages and although they can understand and read all the bonus languages they know, they cannot speak them without spending skill points.

- Natural Armor: A flyer has +4 natural armor.
- Natural Attacks: Flyers can make two claw attacks and one tail attack. Claw attacks deal 1d3 hit points of damage plus Strength modifier; a tail attack deals 1d2 hit points of damage plus Strength penalty or one-half Strength bonus. See the Multiple Natural Attacks sidebar for more details.
- Saurial Qualities: Flyers have the cold torpor, protection from sonic attacks, vulnerability to gas attacks, and scent special qualities as described above.
- Base Hit Dice: Flyers have 2d8 hit dice in addition to Hit Dice from their character levels. These hit dice give them a starting base attack bonus of +1, a Reflex save bonus of +3, 7 skill points (class skills for these skill points are Balance, Craft, and Jump), and 1 feat (usually spent on Flyby Attack).
- Level Adjustment: +3. Flyers are more powerful and gain levels more slowly than the races in the *Player's Handbook*. See the Powerful Races sidebar.

HORNHEADS

Personality: Hornheads tend to be careful, rational planners, choosing their words carefully and loathing taking action without the opportunity for contemplation. They have an interest in alchemy, engineering, and other mental pursuits, as well as physical tasks requiring discipline such as blacksmithing and weaponsmithing.

Physical Description: The largest of the known kinds of saurials, a hornhead has a tail longer than its own body, sharp horns growing from its head, and a bony plate protecting its neck.

Adventurers: Like most adventuring saurials, hornheads seek knowledge of the outside world, but hornheads are consumed by a desire to understand the particulars of the world around them, be they the laws of other cultures, the philosophical underpinnings of a religion, or the arcane secrets of new spells. A hornhead's favored class is wizard, although some choose to develop an innate talent for sorcery instead.

Hornhead Racial Traits

- +2 Strength, +2 Intelligence: Hornheads are strong and have sharp minds.
- Large: As Large creatures, hornheads have a -1 size modifier to Armor Class, a -1 size modifier on attack rolls, and a -4 modifier on Hide checks. They can use larger weapons than humans use, and their lifting and carrying limits are double those of Medium-size characters.
- Tail Reach: Hornheads have 10-foot reach with their tail attacks.
- Hornheads base speed is 30 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Hornheads can see twice as far in starlight, moonlight,

torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

- Favored Class: Wizard. Hornheads have the patience and talent for wizardry (although some become sorcerers, these hornheads do not have sorcerer as their favored class).
- Automatic Languages: Draconic. Bonus Languages: Common, Elven, Sylvan, and Celestial. Saurials have difficulty with other languages and although they can understand and read all the bonus languages they know, they cannot speak them without spending skill points.
- Natural Armor: A hornhead has +5 natural armor.
- Natural Attacks: Hornheads can make two claw attacks and one tail attack. Claw attacks deal 1d4 hit points of damage plus Strength modifier; a tail attack deals 1d4 hit points of damage plus Strength penalty or one-half Strength bonus. See the Multiple Natural Attacks sidebar for more details.
- Saurial Qualities: Hornheads have the cold torpor, protection from sonic attacks, vulnerability to gas attacks, and scent special qualities as described above.
- Base Hit Dice: Hornheads have 2d8 Hit Dice in addition to hit dice from their character levels. These hit dice give them a starting base attack bonus of +1, a Reflex save bonus of +3, 7 skill points (class skills for these skill points are Craft, Jump, and Craft—architecture and engineering), and 1 feat (usually spent on Power Attack).
- Level Adjustment: +2. Hornheads are more powerful and gain levels more slowly than the races in the *Player's Handbook*. See the Powerful Races sidebar for more information.

SAMPLE CHARACTER

DRAGONBAIT: Male finhead saurial Pal10 of Tyr; Medium-size humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d8+6, 10d10+30; hp 131; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 20); Atk +16 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws), +11 melee (1d3+2, tail slap); or +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+9/19-20/x2, *+2 flaming burst longsword*); SA smite evil, turn undead 7/day; SQ aura of courage, saurial qualities, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands (40 points per day), low-light vision, remove disease 3/week; AL LG; SV Fort +17, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Craft (weaponsmithing) +7, Diplomacy +9, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +8, Ride (horse) +5, Speak Language +1 (Common), Spot +8; Alertness, Endurance, Expertise, Power Attack, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: *+2 flaming burst longsword, cloak of resistance +3, belt of giant strength +4, bracers of armor +4, ring of protection +2, Keoghtom's ointment.*

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, the paladin can attempt to smite evil with one normal melee attack. He adds +4 to his attack roll and deals +10 extra points of damage. Smiting a creature that is not evil has no effect but uses the ability for that day.

Turn Undead (Su): Dragonbait can turn undead, forcing them to recoil from the channeled power of his deity. He turns undead as an 8th-level cleric.

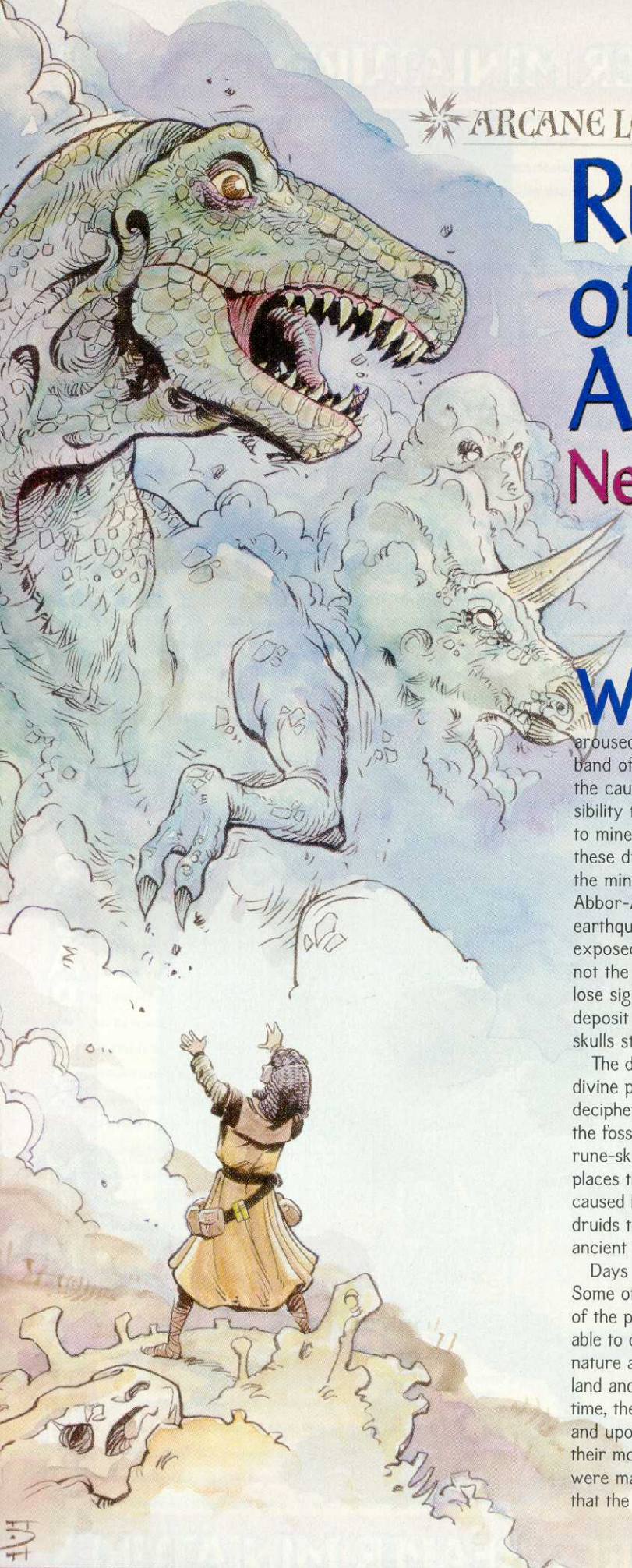
Paladin Spells Prepared: (2/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st—*bless, bless weapon;* 2nd—*delay poison, resist elements.*

History: On his home world, the saurial paladin called Champion served the god of justice. On an extraplanar quest he was captured by a demon but was subsequently freed by the actions of a luck goddess and came to Faerûn. Captured by an evil group led by a sorcerer named Cassana, he was to be sacrificed to provide the soul for an artificial being, named Alias, they were creating. Somehow Alias became alive on her own—without Champion being sacrificed. With the help of Finder Wyvernspur (who at the time was not a deity), the two escaped their captors. Alias distrusted Champion at first, and threatened that if Champion made one wrong move he would be "dragonbait." Lacking the ability to speak in a language she knew, he accepted this term as his name in this world. The two eventually eliminated their captors after being captured again.

The next adventure of this strange couple involved investigating rumors of the return of Moander, an evil god of rot and corruption that had been imprisoned for some time. They and one of the Harpers found that a group of saurials had been brought to Faerûn and enslaved to facilitate the deity's full return to the world. With magical help, they realized that Finder was key to the success of their mission. They teleported to a refuge of Finder's and found him and a halfling ally battling a beholder minion of Moander and its orc troops. With the defeat of the monsters, the group returned to the Lost Vale where the enslaved saurials were working. Using cold magic to make the saurials sluggish, the heroes were able to defeat Dragonbait's people without serious harm on either side. Finder and an allied mage traveled to another plane and succeeded in permanently destroying Moander. Finder inherited the slain deity's divine power and became a god himself.

Elminster encouraged the saurials to remain in the Lost Vale, and Dragonbait and Alias remained there for some time. One of their later adventures involved traveling to Westgate to acquire a powerful magic item that would help the saurials watch their borders more easily. The leaders of Westgate solicited their aid in breaking the back of the Night Masks, which controlled crime in the city. After they unraveled a complex web of payoffs, intrigue, and false identities, they were able to defeat the leader of the Night Masks (inadvertently opening the way for one of Manshoon's clones to take over the organization a year later).

Dragonbait and Alias returned to the Lost Vale. Dragonbait is more settled now, has learned how to speak the Common tongue, and has taken a mate, Copperbloom. He spends most of his time helping protect his people and raise his children. He is still a valiant fighter and champion of good, always ready to defend his homeland and his people against threats. Although he still serves his original deity (known to Faerûnians only as "the god of justice"), Dragonbait acknowledges the Faerûnian deities and receives his divine spells from Tyr. Dragonbait might be found almost anywhere in the Dalelands, often accompanied by Alias or other saurial warriors, usually on a quest for information, resources, or aid for the saurials of the Lost Vale.



ARCANE LORE:

Rune-Skulls of the Abbor-Alz

New Druid Spells

by James Jacobs ✶
illustrated by Dennis Cramer

When rumors of a massive duergar mining operation deep in the Abbor-Alz began to spread, it was only a matter of time before someone's curiosity was aroused. In this case, the someone turned out to be a small band of halfling druids who were investigating the area for the cause of mysterious earthquakes in the region. The possibility that the duergar were using powerful elemental magic to mine precious ore and gems from the hills was more than these druids could ignore, but the halflings never made it to the mine. Not two days into their journey through the Abbor-Alz, they came upon a remarkable sight. One of the earthquakes had sheared off the side of an ancient hill and exposed a stunning collection of dinosaur fossils. But it was not the quantity of these fossils that caused the druids to lose sight of their crusade; it was the fact that the entire deposit of fossils consisted of nearly a hundred rune-carved skulls stacked one atop the other in a pyramid-mound.

The druids quickly determined that the site was one of great divine power and sacred strength, and they set to the task of deciphering the runes immediately. In their haste to remove the fossils, the halfling druids carelessly destroyed many of the rune-skulls, making their investigations more difficult. In many places the runes were wholly obscured by erosion or damage caused by the earthquake, but enough remained intact for the druids to determine that the rune-skulls used a variation of an ancient Elven alphabet.

Days became nights as the druids continued their work. Some of the runes served as obscure insights into the nature of the prehistoric people that crafted them. The halflings were able to determine that this primeval race lived at one with nature and did not build cities or structures but lived with the land and off the land. They viewed the great beasts of their time, the dinosaurs, as the perfection of nature made flesh, and upon the bones of these majestic beasts they recorded their most sacred and holy discoveries. As more translations were made, the druids made an amazing discovery. It seemed that the majority of the runes contained information about

ancient magic practiced by this forgotten race. The halfling druids set to extracting this information and recording the recovered spells from the rune-skulls on parchment, slabs of stone, their armor, their weapons, and even on their own skin. They frantically transcribed on anything portable that they could scratch, write, or wipe written words onto.

So intent were they on their task that the druids did not realize that they had been discovered. Bandit allies of the duergar miners had warned the dark dwarves that the druids were coming to investigate their mining operation. When they came upon the rune-skull site, they found the band of halfling druids collapsed at the base of an exposed cliff, exhausted and in deep slumber. Immediately recognizing that the halflings' careless excavation had become dangerous, the murderous duergar seized their chance and quietly undermined the cliffside further, setting a devious trap. They then retired to a safe vantage point to watch.

That morning, the druids woke eager to continue their translations. But as they began to slowly expose more rune-skulls to the light of day, they triggered the deadly trap the duergar miners had set. With a terrible roar, the cliff crumbled down and buried the halflings under hundreds of tons of rubble and fractured fossils.

The duergar, overjoyed at their success at preventing the druids from discovering their destructive mines, spent the better part of the day sifting through the rubble looking for treasure and gear to scavenge off the dead halflings to sell to their bandit allies to the north. In their sifting, they uncovered nine scrolls of the rune-skull translations. They could tell that the scrolls contained potent magic, but they had no way of utilizing it. They planned to sell the scrolls for a pretty profit to the bandits and returned to their mine content that their operation was safe once again.

Nearly a month later, when the duergar had missed two arranged meetings with their allies, the bandits went against the rules established by the duergar and sought the dwarves out at their lair, figuring that their silence was the result of a discovery of a particularly good vein of gold or gems. At the duergar mine, the bandits discovered a killing field. The entire site was strewn with rubble. The mining equipment had been savaged beyond repair, apparently by behemoth jaws. They found duergar miners in pieces, scattered haphazardly over their lair like a thin layer of rotting, red snow. And everywhere, stamped into the solid stone ground, were massive clawed footprints of shocking size and number. Horrified at the find, the bandits fled the site, but not before the bravest few of their number looted what they could from the wretched ruins. Among this loot were the nine stolen scrolls.

Over the next several months, well after the bandits sold the scrolls to adventurers and shady merchants, word of the mysterious occurrence at the mine began to spread. Additionally, the halfling druids had made several notes as to the nature of their discovery in the glosses on their scrolls; enough to whet the appetites of many scholars, adventurers, and fellow druids, but unfortunately none of the notes listed where the Rune-Skulls had been found. To this day, adventurers continue to search the Abbor-Alz, hoping to stumble across the site and unearth more forgotten magic from the ancient past. These adventurers are always sure to leave the region of the ruined mine before nightfall, for as the sun begins to set, strange noises can be heard on the wind, noises of terrible chaos and thunder in the earth, of faint, distant roars, and of high-pitched screams of terror. One thing seems certain: Whatever vengeful curse or spirit rose on the night the rune-skulls were buried for the second time still stalks that region of the Abbor-Alz when the sun goes down.

DINOSAUR STAMPEDE

Evocation (Force)
Level: Drd 7
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: 20-ft.-radius spread
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You call upon potent natural forces and energies and manifest them in the form of a swath of intangible, spectral stampeding dinosaurs. Creatures in the area take 1d8 points of damage +1 point per caster level (up to +20). Creatures more than 10 feet above the ground are not affected by *dinosaur stampede.*

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

If your campaign does not have an ancient pre-history filled with dinosaurs, you can use a different scenario than the one presented in this article to introduce the rune-skulls' spells into you campaign:

- The spells are used by a race of lizardfolk who dwell in an isolated jungle where they worship great dinosaurs as gods.
- The spells call upon the spirits of twisted, bestial animals, and only evil druids have access to the spells.
- The spells come from another plane where dinosaurs are the normal fauna. Druids can cast them by undertaking a great quest or discovering the extraplanar artifact that they are recorded on.
- The spells have nothing to do with dinosaurs, and their visual effects have a different animal theme (shark for *spirit-jaws* and *dire hunger,* elephants for *dinosaur stampede* and *thunderous roar,* tiger for *essence of the raptor).* All druids are capable of casting these spells.

With a simple gesture (a free action), you can make the *dinosaur stampede* move along the ground up to 60 feet per round (moving its effective point of origin). If part of the area of a dinosaur stampede extends outside the maximum range, that portion vanishes and has no effect outside the range. Creatures cannot be damaged more than once per round by *dinosaur stampede.*

Material Component: A fossil.

DIRE HUNGER

Transmutation
Level: Drd 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The target creature's face elongates into a toothy, dinosaur-like snout filled with

SPELLS OF THE RUNE-SKULLS

3RD LEVEL

Spiritjaws. Ghostly jaws grapple the target, causing 2d6 damage.

Thunderous Roar. Deafening roars fill the area of effect, causing 1d6 sonic damage/2 levels, and creatures in the area might fall prone or be deafened.

4TH LEVEL

Enhance Wildshape. Your wildshape ability improves in one of several possible ways.

Essence of the Raptor. Your speed increases to 60 feet, and you gain the scent ability and a +8 bonus to Hide, Jump, Listen, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks.

Starvation. Target living creature suffers 1d6 subdual damage/level and becomes fatigued.

5TH LEVEL

Dire Hunger. Target creature grows dinosaur jaws and, maddened by hunger, attacks the nearest creature.

6TH LEVEL

Hungry Gizzard. Large gizzard swallows Medium-sized or smaller target, dealing 2d8+8 damage plus 1d8 acid damage.

7TH LEVEL

Dinosaur Stampede. Summons a swarm of spectral dinosaurs to stampede about, causing 1d8+1/level damage for 1 round/level.

9TH LEVEL

Transmute Rock to Lava. Transforms one 10-ft. cube to lava.

serrated teeth, and the victim becomes maddened by terrible pangs of hunger, viewing all creatures as food sources.

The target creature gains a new bite attack that does damage according to the target creature's size:

Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Add one and a half times the target creature's Strength bonus to this damage. If the creature already has a bite attack that does more damage, that damage rating is used instead.

The target creature eschews all other attacks or actions save for its new bite attack, but it defends itself normally. It moves to attack the nearest living creature it can get to and attacks this creature until it is dead or until another living creature is closer. The target creature attacks whatever living creature is nearest, regardless of former allegiance or personal connection. If moving toward the nearest living creature would move the creature into a dangerous area (precarious footing, a huge fire, or a deadly trap is in the way) the target creature moves around the hazard if it can or moves to attack another creature if moving around the hazard isn't possible. If such movement brings the target creature closer to another living creature, it attacks that creature instead. If the target of the spell cannot detect or get to a living creature nearby, it goes looking for one to attack.

ENHANCE WILDSHAPE

Transmutation

Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell infuses your wildshape ability with magical energy, magnifying and enhancing its power. The type of enhancement must be chosen at the time the spell is cast and cannot be changed once the spell is in effect. The next time you activate your wildshape ability (during the duration of *enhance wildshape*), this spell enhances your new form in the way you selected. The enhancement to your wildshape remains as long as you stay in that form but does not apply to your next wildshape form. If you do not activate your wildshape ability during the duration of *enhance wildshape,* the spell has no effect.

You may select one of the following enhancements when you cast this spell:

- You may assume the form of a beast with your next wildshape.
- You may assume the form of a plant with your next wildshape.
- You gain the extraordinary abilities of the new form.
- The new form assumed is stronger than normal and gains a +4 bonus to Strength.
- The new form assumed is more agile than normal and gains a +4 bonus to Dexterity.
- The new form assumed is healthier than normal and gains a +4 bonus to Constitution.

A druid can be affected by more than one *enhance wildshape* spell at a time, but a different wildshape enhancement must be chosen each time.

ESSENCE OF THE RAPTOR

Transmutation

Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You infuse yourself with the essence of a prehistoric raptor. Your physical appearance does not change. Your speed increases to 60 feet (if it is already 60 feet or faster, it does not change), and you gain a +8 bonus to Hide, Jump, Listen, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks.

You also gain the scent ability. You can detect opponents by sense of smell within 30 feet. If the opponent is upwind, the range is 60 feet. If it is downwind the range is 15 feet. You can detect the creature's presence but not its specific location. Noting the direction of the scent is a partial action. If you move within 5 feet of the scent's source, you can pinpoint that source.

You can identify familiar scents just as a human can identify a familiar sight. You can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom or Widerness Lore check to find or follow a track. The DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by +2. Creatures tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility. Water ruins the trail, and other false or powerful odors can easily mask a scent; the presence of such an odor spoils the ability to properly detect or identify creatures, and the base Wilderness Lore DC to track becomes 20 rather than 10.

HUNGRY GIZZARD

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Drd 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One Medium-size or smaller creature
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A Large bulbous, fleshy mass seethes into being around a single Medium-sized or smaller target within range. The target can make a Reflex save to avoid becoming engulfed by the *hungry gizzard,* otherwise it is entombed within the disembodied digestive organ.

Each round a creature remains trapped inside a *hungry gizzard* (starting on the round the spell is cast), the target creature is considered grappled and takes 2d8+8 points of crushing damage per round plus 1d8 points of acid damage.

While engulfed, the target creature can cast a spell only if the spell has no somatic component, the material components are in hand, and a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level) is made. An engulfed creature can cut its way out by using claws or a light slashing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 20). Once the creature exits, the gizzard immediately melts into a pool of blood and meaty chunks.

There is no immediate physical exit; the only way for those trapped inside to escape is to cut their way free, to dispel the spell, or to have allies outside destroy the gizzard. The gizzard is fairly easy to strike in combat from a vantage point outside of its interior, due to its size (AC 4). A newly formed *hungry gizzard* has 5 hit points per level of the caster. The gizzard is treated like an unattended object for the purposes of saving throws. A *hungry gizzard* reduced to 0 hit points is immediately destroyed.

Material Component: A dried gizzard.

SPIRITJAWS

Evocation [Force]
Level: Drd 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Jaws of force
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

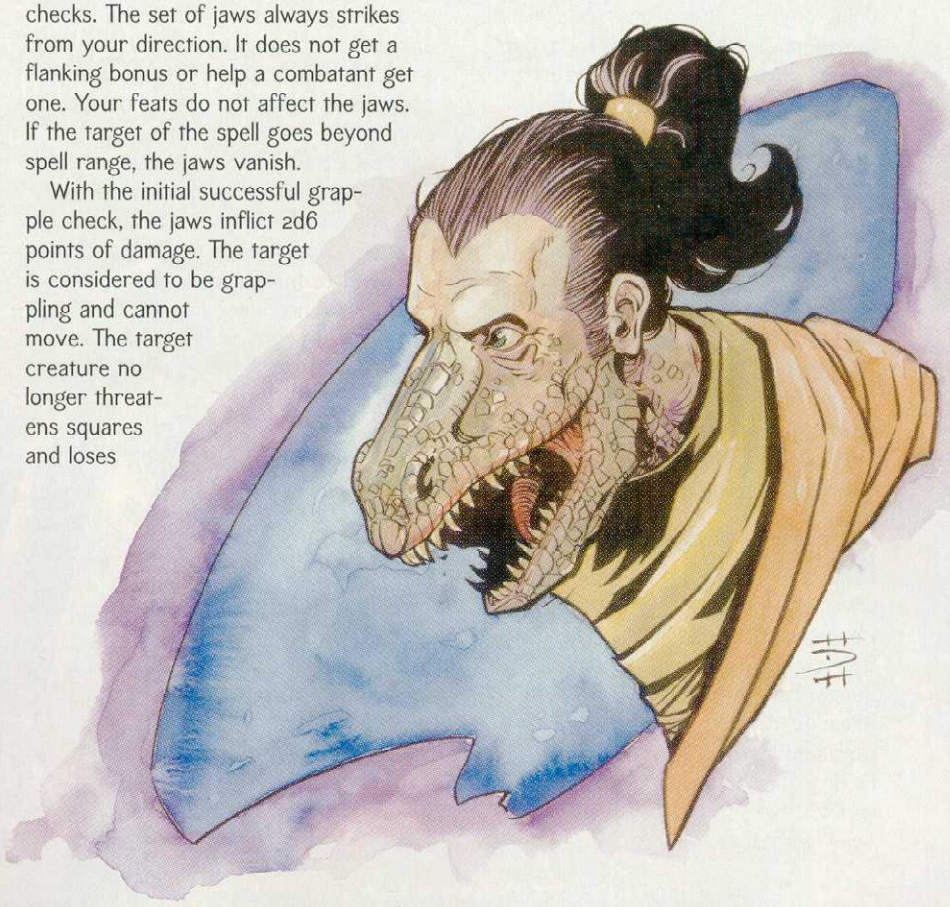
A set of ghostly dinosaur jaws fade into being and attack the creature you designate. The jaws attempt to grapple the opponent, starting with one attack the round the spell is cast and continuing each round thereafter. The set of jaws uses your base attack bonus as its attack bonus (possibly allowing it multiple attacks per round in subsequent rounds), and it gains a +8 bonus to grapple checks. The set of jaws always strikes from your direction. It does not get a flanking bonus or help a combatant get one. Your feats do not affect the jaws. If the target of the spell goes beyond spell range, the jaws vanish.

With the initial successful grapple check, the jaws inflict 2d6 points of damage. The target is considered to be grappling and cannot move. The target creature no longer threatens squares and loses its Dexterity bonus to AC against opponents not grappling it.

Attacking the set of jaws has no effect. A magical force effect, the jaws cannot be damaged, but *disintegrate* or a *sphere of annihilation* destroys the effect.

The target creature can cast a spell only if the spell has no somatic component, the material components are in hand, and a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level) is made. A creature grappled by the set of jaws can attempt to escape by succeeding at a grapple check against the jaws or by making a successful Escape Artist check as a standard action opposed by the set of jaws' grapple check.

Each round that the jaws maintain the grapple, make an opposed grapple check for the jaws. If the jaws win, you can deal 2d6 points of damage or you can pin the opponent. A pinned opponent is held immobile and must break the pin before it can escape the grapple. Creatures other than those grappling the pinned target gain a +4 bonus on attack rolls to hit it. If the jaws have subsequent attacks (granted by your attack bonus) you can use them to cause damage to a pinned target or to



make more grapple attempts against that target.

Commanding the jaws is a free action (mental command). Should you be unable to command the jaws, they vanish.

STARVATION

Transmutation
Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

You inflict wracking hunger pangs on the target creature. It must make a Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of subdual damage per level of the caster (maximum 15d6) and become fatigued. A creature that makes a successful save takes half damage and is not fatigued by the spell. Unlike natural starvation, this damage can be healed normally.

A fatigued creature cannot charge or run and suffers an effective penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity. After 8 hours of complete rest, a fatigued creature is no longer fatigued. A fatigued creature becomes exhausted when doing anything that causes the creature to become fatigued (lack of food, dangerous environmental temperatures, and ending a barbarian rage). See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for descriptions of these conditions.

A fatigued creature that fails its saving throw against *starvation* suffers subdual damage as normal and becomes exhausted. An exhausted creature moves at half speed and suffers an effective penalty of -6 to Strength and Dexterity. After 1 hour of complete rest, an exhausted creature becomes fatigued.

Material Component: A piece of spoiled food.

THUNDEROUS ROAR

Evocation [Sonic]
Level: Drd 3
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Area: 20-ft.-radius burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell causes the targeted area to become filled with the enraged roaring of a thousand dinosaurs. The resulting blast of sound can be heard for miles, but it only threatens those in its area of effect. All creatures in this area suffer 1d6 points of damage per 2 caster levels (maximum of 5d6), with a successful Fortitude saving throw halving the damage. A creature that fails its save is deafened for 1d6 minutes per caster level. Additionally, any creature that takes damage from this spell must make a Reflex saving throw or be knocked prone from the force of the roar. Crystalline creatures suffer 1d6 points of sonic damage per caster level (maximum of 10d6).

TRANSMUTE ROCK TO LAVA

Transmutation
Level: Drd 9
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One 10-ft. cube
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: No

This spell turns natural, uncut, or unworked rock of any sort into an equal volume of lava. Magical or enchanted stone is not affected by the spell. The depth of the lava created cannot exceed 10 feet. All creatures standing in the area of effect are allowed a Reflex saving throw to negate the damage, provided that they can and do physically leave the area by the shortest route possible.

Creatures that fail their saving throw sink hip or chest deep into the lava and suffer 20d6 points of fire damage each round that they remain in the area and suffer 10d6 points of fire damage for the 1d3 rounds after leaving the area. Creatures immersed in the lava have their speed reduced to 5 feet and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls and AC.

If *transmute rock to lava* is cast upon the ceiling of a cavern or tunnel, the lava falls to the floor and spreads out in a 15-foot-radius pool at a depth of about one and a half feet. The falling lava and the ensuing cave-in deal 2d6 points of fire damage and 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage to anyone caught directly beneath the area, or half damage to those who succeed at Reflex saves. Creatures in the area suffer 2d6 points of fire damage each round until they leave and 1d6 points of fire damage for 1d3 rounds after that.

While one cannot target castles and stone constructions with this spell, casting the spell upon unworked stone below or adjacent to the structure can do serious damage to the structure. Even though structures and objects suffer half damage from fire, this still means that contact with lava does 10d6 points of damage per round to the structure. Even with hardness, most structures quickly succumb to exposure to lava.

The lava cools naturally from its surface toward the center, slowly reverting to stone. If pooled on the ground after falling from the ceiling, the lava could take as long as two days to completely cool. If an area of ground was converted to lava, the core of lava area could remain molten for a month or more. The area of lava should be considered dangerous to walk through for at least a day. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on lava hazards. D

Stone, Road, and Tusk

Three Unusual Woodland Prestige Classes

by Eric Cagle • illustrated by Chris Appel

To different adventurers, nature means different things. To fighters and barbarians, nature is a challenge that must be faced and overcome. Monks either find harmony in nature or ignore it entirely while focusing on the body and mind. Wizards and sorcerers often see it as something that must be crossed between point A and point B or something that might yield ingredients for powerful rituals. Rogues and bards find nature inspiring at best and tedious at worst. Clerics differ in opinion based on their faith and personal outlook, but most see it as an extension of their own or another god's will.

To druids and rangers, however, nature is power.

Most druids and rangers are found among elves, gnomes, and humans. Elves are the prototypical druids and rangers, with a deep understanding of nature and a respect for its power. Gnomes also have a close connection to the land, making their homes in burrows beneath the ground. Humans and half-elves with an affinity for the old ways heed the call to become druids. Human and half-elf rangers tend to be more martial, protecting the wilderness with a single-minded dedication.

The other races, dwarves, halflings, and half-orcs, are rarely found in the role of druid or ranger. These races do not usually have the proper mindset or requisite affinity for nature. However, there is nothing stopping a player from creating a character that breaks the mold. This article addresses the interesting roleplaying challenges that members of these races contend with when they become druids and rangers, and it presents three new prestige classes.

DWARVEN DRUIDS & RANGERS

The dwarven mind has difficulty sensing nature as anything more than a resource to be used for the benefit of the clan. With the exception of stone, metals, and ores, nature is viewed with the same suspicion reserved for outsiders.

Occasionally, a dwarf develops a deep appreciation for the forces of nature, bonding with the earth and seeking out the deepest and wildest caverns. As the dwarf ages, she spends more and more time deep underground, trying to escape the incessant noise of the forge or the endless picking of the mines. Such dwarves sometimes claim that they can hear the stone scream as it is mined, and they try to explain to their kin about the damage they are causing. This does not sit well with other dwarves, who believe that the riches of the earth are a gift from Moradin, freely harvested by anyone who works hard to take it from the rock.

Dwarven druids and rangers usually choose animal companions common to underground regions, such as giant lizards, badgers, and dire bats.

Dwarven druids are usually found in one of two roles. The most common is the loner who flees the safety and tradition of the clan to wander the dark mazes of caves deep under the surface. She watches the subtle cycles of the underground seasons and learns the habits of the bizarre creatures that live there. Unlike surface druids, a dwarf drawn to nature rarely bothers with spells that affect wood, plants, and to a lesser extent, fire. She is well versed in the lore of stone, ore, and earth. The second type of dwarf druid is the clan wiseman. She might belong to a clan that has not turned its back on nature (or has fallen into barbarism), a clan that finds her insight into the natural world to be extremely important.

Dwarven rangers are typically troubleshooters for the clan, seeking out and eliminating enemies before they become powerful enough to threaten the community. Some rangers act as scouts, escorts, and couriers, navigating caves and long-disused tunnels with ease. A few such scouts receive special training, allowing them to move quickly and quietly through the caverns they patrol. Like the rare dwarf druids, these warriors spend more and more time alone in the deep caves as they age. Known as cave stalkers, these unique individuals roam extensive cavern networks and often serve as the first line of defense for a dwarven stronghold.

CAVE STALKER

Most dwarven strongholds are made up of numerous tunnels, warrens, and cave systems, some of which have been ignored or forgotten by their owners. Monstrous creatures and humanoids, like orcs, goblins, and ogres expand like fungus in these cold, dark areas, using them as staging grounds to attack the heart of dwarven communities. To prevent this from happening, certain dwarves are trained from an early age to navigate the long-forgotten tunnels and make preemptive strikes against their enemies. These stealthy warriors are known as cave stalkers.

Cave stalkers specialize in hunting down and eliminating creatures in the dark, twisting caves around dwarven communities. They use stealth, ambush, and deception to single out foes and

remove them one by one. A typical strategy is to track down the enemy, then *meld into stone* close to their location. The cave stalker then waits for her enemy to pass by, leaping out from behind to attack when the target least expects it. A cave stalker also uses her finely tuned stonecunning ability to find the best areas to create pits, cave-ins, and rockslides, often eliminating the enemy without drawing her axe. If a cave stalker is outnumbered, she retreats into the darkness, hiding until she can pick off individual targets.

Because they spend so much time in the stark wilderness of caves and caverns, cave stalkers are slightly ostracized by the rest of the clan. The typical dwarf shudders at the thought of leaving behind her clan, traditions, and forge, so the rootless existence of the cave stalker seems like a social aberration. Still, there is great honor to be found in protecting the clan from attack, so they are given some respect. None of this concerns the cave stalker, who cares little for what others think; she finds purpose in what she does every time she brings down another one of her enemies. She prefers to work alone, but also knows that cooperation with others has its advantages.

Rangers are the most likely individuals to become cave stalkers, and druids, rogues, and fighters are also common. Feral tribes of barbaric dwarves sometimes produce cave stalkers, who hunt down their foes in silence and then explode into a terrible frenzy once they ambush their prey. Clerics of Moradin are sometimes drawn to this class, eliminating enemies with single-minded zeal. Sorcerers, wizards, monks, and bards, which are rare in dwarven society, almost never become cave stalkers.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the cave stalker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Cave stalkers are proficient with simple weapons and with light and medium armor, but they gain no new proficiency with shields.

Spells Per Day: At 1st, 3rd, and 5th level, the cave stalker gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of cave stalker to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Improved Stonecunning (Ex): At 1st level, the cave stalker increases her racial stonecunning ability from +2 to +4 on checks to notice unusual stonework, such as sliding walls, stonework traps, new construction, unsafe stone surfaces, shaky stone ceilings, and the like. This bonus, like the normal dwarven racial bonus, applies to Search checks made to detect stonework traps. In addition, the range at which the cave stalker has a chance to automatically detect unusual stonework increases from 10 feet to 20 feet.

Sneak Attack: If a cave stalker can catch an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from her attack, she can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Any time the cave stalker's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether she actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), the cave stalker's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases to +2d6 at 5th level. Should the cave stalker score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

It takes precision and penetration to hit a vital spot, so ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 feet away or less.

With a sap or an unarmed strike, the cave stalker can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. She cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty, because she must make optimal use of her weapon in order to execute the sneak attack.

A cave stalker can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. The cave stalker must also be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The cave stalker cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a cave stalker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

BASE ATTACK BONUS: +5.
FEATS: Blind-fight, Track.
RACE: Dwarf.
CRAFT (TRAPMAKING): 5 ranks.
MOVE SILENTLY: 5 ranks.
WILDERNESS LORE: 5 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

The cave stalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

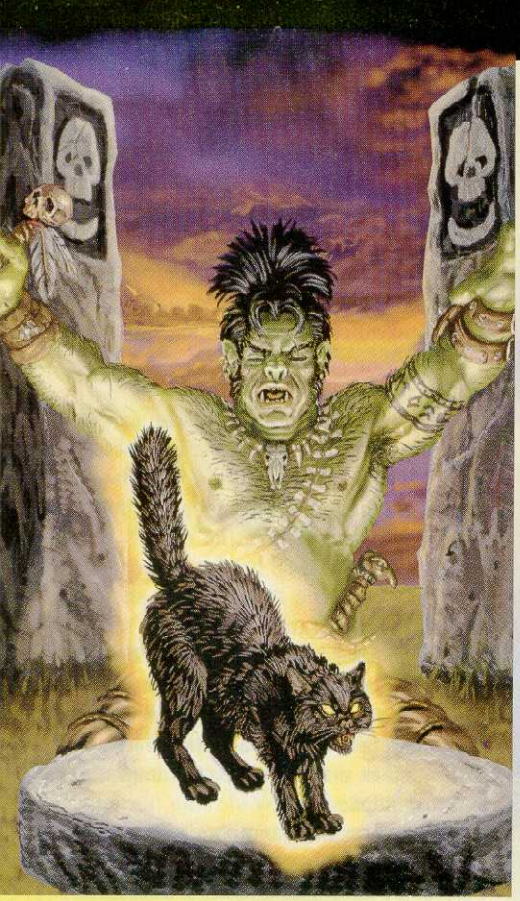
STR: Climb, Swim.
DEX: Hide, Use Rope.
CON: Concentration.
INT: Craft (trapmaking), Knowledge (nature).
WIS: Intuit Direction, Listen, Profession, Spot, Wilderness Lore.
CHA: –

SKILL POINTS AT EACH LEVEL: 4 + Int modifier.

THE CAVE STALKER

HIT DIE: D8

Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Improved stonecunning	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	*Meld into stone*	
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +1d6	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Enhanced darkvision	
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +2d6	+1 level of existing class



If a cave stalker gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Meld Into Stone (Sp): A cave stalker can cast *meld into stone* as a cleric equal to her cave stalker class level. Starting at 3rd level, the cave stalker can use this ability once per day, plus one additional time per day per point of Wisdom bonus.

Enhanced Darkvision (Ex): Cave Stalkers spend most of their lives in the darkest caverns they can find. As a cave stalker's skills improve, her almost mystical understanding of the deep caverns sharpens her inborn darkvision, allowing her to see farther than other members of her race. Once a cave stalker achieves fourth level, her darkvision range increases by 20 feet.

This bonus stacks with other natural or extraordinary abilities that improve darkvision, but it does nothing to improve magically granted darkvision.

Any condition that causes the character to lose her normal darkvision also causes the enhanced darkvision to fail.

HALF-ORC DRUIDS AND RANGERS

To most orcs and half-orcs, nature is something to be conquered—the idea that it can be worshiped, much less respected, is abhorrent to them. Rare individuals, however, hear voices in the winds, whispers in the rocks, and secrets in a crackling fire. They are drawn to nature in a way that none of their tribe would ever understand. These individuals are usually the target of scorn, fear, and ridicule by the rest of the clan, who cast them out or make life miserable enough that they leave on their own.

A half-orc who becomes a druid has a particularly rough time. Often lacking the physical prowess of his kin, he must make up for it with his spells and choice of animal companions. Half-orc druids or rangers prefer animal companions that are tough, aggressive, and not very subtle—bears, wolves, boars, and badgers, for example. Half-orcs rarely choose avians, like hawks and eagles, mainly because of their close association with elves.

Half-orc druids are even more likely to be loners than other races. Despised, hated, or at the very least, misunderstood, half-orc druids can bond with nature in a remarkable way. They find companionship among animals—who don't care about race—and they are drawn to extreme climates where they will not be disturbed. A good half-orc druid protects the animals and plants in his realm with a single-minded determination. While he understands that nature is cruel and uncaring, he usually shows a deep compassion for the plants and animals around him. An evil half-orc druid exemplifies an extreme version of the idea of survival of the fittest. He stakes out his territory and defends it from anything that tries to take it away, including the previous owners. He is the bane of elves and other good forest-dwelling races, because he is able to twist and pervert nature into a weapon to be used against them.

Good half-orc rangers become fierce protectors of the wilderness, often using their skills against the very orcs who exiled them. Evil half-orc rangers are the stuff of nightmares—stealthy murderers that lurk in the woods, waiting to ambush their prey. Worse, they might still maintain close ties with their orc kin, making advance strikes against difficult targets in anticipation of an attack by the rest of the horde. Evil half-orc rangers prefer using melee weapons and ranged weapons that take advantage of their high Strength, like javelins and mighty bows.

Some half-orc druids or rangers learn terrible magical secrets that merge evil spirits with natural creatures. These are the fiend binders, described below.

FIEND BINDER

Survivors of attacks by orc hordes sometimes tell stories of the countryside being plagued by evil, vile creatures days or weeks before the assault. Livestock goes missing and is found later, wandering on roads and fields, attacking anything that moves. Wolves, bears, and other creatures of the wilds, which normally shun contact with humans, become bold and attack with an unholy desire for mayhem. When the orc warband finally descends on the hapless village, packs of fiendish dogs, wolves, and boars with glowing red eyes and frothing mouths are in the vanguard. The source behind these tales is the fiend binder.

The fiend binder is a terrifying figure who learns a secret, perverse ritual that merges the spirit of an evil entity onto the soul of a normal creature. Through this ritual, the fiend binder creates terrifying animals that lead the charge of any assault. Predators are the preferred animals for this process, including dogs, bears, wolves, and big cats, like cheetahs. However, fiend binders have been known to use the process on domesticated animals—fiendish cattle that cause herds to stampede or murderous pigs that attack and devour their owners.

Some fiend binders are so enamored with the chaos caused by their creations that they release the maddened beast back into the wild, allowing it to terrorize the countryside. This sometimes backfires, as when the bound creature goes on a rampage inside the orc camp. Some tribes see this as a form of entertainment, honing their battle skills as they try of kill the beast. Other tribes take a dim view to the fiend binder's careless actions and banish him into the wilderness. Because of this, most fiend binders are loners.

Druids who turn away from nature are the most likely candidates to become fiend binders. Rangers with particularly vicious and twisted attitudes toward animals also become fiend binders. Clerics, particularly those who

worship Gruumsh, become fiend binders to create packs of fiendish warhounds. Orc wizards and sorcerers are already rare, but have been known to be drawn to this class.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the fiend binder prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Characters taking a level of fiend binder gain no new proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Spells Per Day: At 2nd and 4th level, the fiend binder gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of fiend binder to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Domination of the Master (Sp): The fiend binder gains the ability to impose his will on certain creatures. Once a day the fiend binder can cast *dominate animal* as a 10th-level druid. The target creature must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 13 + the fiend binder's Charisma modifier) to resist the effect.

Fiend Binding (Su): Beginning at 1st level, the fiend binder can perform a perverse ritual that binds a fiendish spirit onto an animal. To do this, the fiend binder must have used the *domination of the master* ability (see above) on the creature within the last 24 hours, and the creature must be confined somehow. (Typically, the fiend binder uses *domination of the master* to force the creature into a suitable cage.) He then summons an evil and tainted entity, which merges with the creature over eight painful and terrifying hours. During this time, the fiend binder can take short breaks from working and engage in light activity, such as walking, talking, or complete rest, but cannot run, fight, cast spells, use magic items, or perform any other physically or mentally demanding task. If the fiend binder is disturbed during the ritual or allows more than 12 hours to pass since the beginning of the ritual, the ritual is ruined. Once the ritual is complete, the creature permanently gains the fiendish template (see Appendix 3: Templates in the *Monster Manual*). The fiend binder can only imprint a fiend onto an animal; other creature types are immune to this effect.

Fiend binding I allows the ritual to be performed on an animal with no more than 3 Hit Dice. Fiend binding II works on an animal up to 6 Hit Dice, and fiend binding III works on an animal up to 9 Hit Dice.

The process also allows the fiend binder to treat creatures affected by this ability as animal companions. A fiend binder can treat more than one creature affected by this ability as an animal companion as long as the creatures' total Hit Dice don't exceed the fiend binder's character level. However, a fiend binder can perform the ritual any number of times, releasing the uncontrolled creatures back into the wild.

This ability functions independently of a druid's or ranger's ability to have an animal companion. An adventuring character with seven druid levels and five fiend binder levels could have seven hit dice worth of normal animal companions and five hit dice worth of fiendish animal companions.

Empathic Link (Su): At 2nd level, the fiend binder gains an empathic link that allows him to communicate telepathically with his bound companions to a maximum distance of one mile. The fiend binder and the companion can understand one another as if a *speak with animals* effect were in force. Of course, intelligence is still a factor in the content of such conversations and misunderstandings on that basis are still possible.

Animal Senses (Su): At 4th level, the fiend binder can sense things through an animal bound and controlled by the fiend binding ability. The character can hear through the animal companion's ears or smell through its nose (this means that the character can use the animal's scent ability if the bound animal has that ability). The fiend binder can activate his animal senses as a standard action, and he does not lose the ability to sense events around him by doing so. A fiend binder can use this ability a number of times per day equal to one plus his Charisma bonus. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's fiend binder class level.

Speak with Master (Ex): Also at 4th level, the fiend binder gains the ability to communicate verbally with his bound and controlled companions in a language of his own. Creatures other than

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a fiend binder, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

ALIGNMENT: Any evil.
FEATS: Iron Will.
RACE: Orc or half-orc.
ANIMAL EMPATHY: 8 ranks.
INTIMIDATE: 4 ranks.
SPELLCASTING: Ability to cast *summon monster I* or *summon nature's ally I.*

CLASS SKILLS

The fiend binder's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:
STR: –
DEX: Ride.
CON: Concentration.
INT: Knowledge (nature), Spellcraft.
WIS: –
CHA: Animal Empathy, Handle Animal, Intimidate.

SKILL POINTS AT EACH LEVEL: 4 + Int modifier.

THE FIEND BINDER

HIT DIE: D8

Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	*Domination of the master*, fiend binding I	
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Empathic link	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Fiend binding II	
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Animal senses (hearing, smell), speak with master	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Fiend binding III	

his animal companions cannot understand this communication without magical aid.

HALFLING DRUIDS AND RANGERS

Halflings are a bit of a dichotomy when it comes to the natural world. On one hand, their nomadic wandering takes them through areas of pristine wilderness, far from any civilization. There they learn to respect nature's strength and wonder. On the other hand, halflings are social creatures who enjoy the company of others. The typical halfling is a rogue, whose focus is on the trappings of civilization—theft of goods, information gathering, and the like. These two ideas make halfling druids and rangers interesting and unique.

Halfling druids usually separate themselves from the rest of their clan and take to the trail, blazing their own if none exists. However, halflings understand wanderlust and send these individuals off with a fond farewell, knowing that they might return someday. Halfling druids who remain with their people serve multiple roles—healer, seer, and tender of the clan animals. They watch the weather and seasons, indicating the best time for the clan to pick up stakes and move on.

Halfling rangers are usually loners. Some serve as trailblazers for the clan, always moving and seeing what's beyond the next hill. They scout out the terrain, keeping their eye out for danger and eliminating many troublesome creatures before the clan is even aware of a threat. If halfling rangers are rare, evil ones are even more exotic. All halflings carry a bit of a mean streak, but evil halfling rangers take this to an extreme, playing harrowing games with their enemies before slitting their throats in the middle of the night.

The animal companions that halfling druids and rangers usually choose are swift and stealthy, such as panthers, wolves, eagles, and owls. Over time, they ally themselves with larger creatures that can be used both as mounts and fighting companions, like bears.

Many halfling druids and rangers aspire to become prairie runners. This prestige class is described below.

PRAIRIE RUNNER

The prairie grass sways in the wind like water in the tide, with nothing around for miles and miles to stop the breeze. In the distance, a tiny figure can be seen running through the grass with a steady, graceful purpose. Her feet barely touch the ground, and her eyes are fixed on the horizon, taking in everything around her but also shutting everything out. For the prairie runner, nothing matters except for a steady stride, the rhythm of her breath, and the serenity of her mind. She is chasing after an elusive state of being called "the Run."

Nomadic halfling family groups sometimes travel great distances, journeying them far from other clans. Although most clans stick to tried-and-true patterns, some strike out into new territory. Over the centuries, a special group of halflings has developed, and it is this group, more than any other, that allows the far-ranging halfling clans to maintain contact with one another and scout dangerous terrain; members of this special group are called prairie runners. These halflings have an innate sense that allows them to find the best paths to take. They also have been blessed with amazing speed and stamina, which helps them make long, arduous journeys quickly and easily. Prairie runners are sent out as scouts and trailblazers, finding suitable campsites, water sources, and hunting grounds for the clan.

Prairie runners are also used as messengers between the far-flung clans, carrying messages when magic fails or the assurance of a fellow halfling is necessary to maintain relations. Because of this, many prairie runners train in diplomacy. The sight of an approaching prairie runner is a cause of celebration for a clan, because she is full of news, gossip, and vital information of all kinds. Other than food and a place to rest, prairie runners rarely ask for payment for their services, but small tokens of appreciation are accepted. Because they must travel lightly, prairie runners must be diplomatic when a clan leader gives them a

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a prairie runner, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

FEATS: Endurance, Run.
RACE: Halfling.
INTUIT DIRECTION: 4 ranks
WILDERNESS LORE: 8 ranks.
SPECIAL: Must spend three days alone on the prairie. If the character receives any aid while meeting this requirement, she must begin the trial again.

CLASS SKILLS

The prairie runner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

STR: Jump, Swim.
DEX: Move Silently, Tumble.
CON: Concentration.
INT: –
WIS: Heal, Intuit Direction, Listen, Wilderness Lore.
CHA: Diplomacy.

SKILL POINTS AT EACH LEVEL: 4 + Int modifier.

THE PRAIRIE RUNNER

HIT DIE D8

Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Fast movement, fleet of foot 1/day
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Trance of the run, pathlore
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Fleet of foot 2/day
4th	+3	+4	+1	+3	Bolster the runner
5th	+3	+4	+1	+3	Fleet of foot 3/day, *haste*

heavy or bulky gift, doing their best to show their appreciation for the gift, but also politely declining.

Prairie runners almost never wear armor heavier than leather, and they carry only light weapons. They do their best to avoid combat, relying on their speed and agility to get them out of danger. If a prairie runner has no choice, she stays on the move, sprinting and dodging gracefully with each strike.

Instead of relying on steeds, which can sicken, become injured, or die out in the wilderness, prairie runners have become superb long-distance runners. Prairie runners become obsessed with the Run—a transcendental state of being in which they lose any sense of self. When a prairie runner enters this trance, she becomes incredibly attuned to her body, falling into a steady rhythm that allows her to run for hours and hours without food, water, or rest. She becomes faster and faster as she runs, until she becomes almost a blur. Over time, an experienced prairie runner learns how to pass along some of her stamina and endurance to others, allowing them to move almost as quickly with her through the wilderness.

Rangers and druids are the most common classes to become prairie runners, as they are used to the hardships of the wilderness and do not mind acting alone. Fighters who pack lightly sometimes become prairie runners, as well as some monks, who find a spiritual purity in the Run. A few barbarians become prairie runners, although it takes special discipline to balance the serenity of the Run and the barbarian rage. Clerics of Fharlanghn are the most likely clerics to become prairie runners. Wizards, sorcerers, rogues, and bards are almost never drawn to this path—wizards and sorcerers usually lack the physical stamina, and rogues and bards often become bored by the loneliness of the wilds.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the prairie runner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Characters that take a level of prairie runner gain no new proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Fast Movement (Ex): The prairie runner has a speed faster than the norm for her race by +10 feet when wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load). This movement stacks with the barbarian fast movement class ability.

Fleet of Foot (Su): Starting at 1st level, a prairie runner can drastically increase her speed for short distances as a standard action when wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load). This is similar in most respects to the *expeditious retreat* spell, although the duration lasts for 10 minutes per prairie runner class level.

Trance of the Run (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a prairie runner can enter a trance-like state that allows her to run great distances for a long period of time. She can hustle (see Overland Movement, Chapter 9: Adventuring in the *Player's Handbook*) a number of hours equal to her Constitution bonus plus class level. One hour after that, the prairie runner must make a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue running for another hour—if she fails, she takes 1 point of subdual damage. Every additional hour increases the DC by 1 and causes twice the damage taken in the previous failed save. A prairie runner in a trance does not have to sleep or eat, and only requires the normal amount of sleep and food when she comes out of the trance and stops running.

Pathlore (Ex): At 2nd level, the prairie runner gains an intuitive understanding of the best path to take through the wilderness. The prairie runner receives a +10 insight bonus to Wilderness Lore checks for the purposes of determining the easiest and most direct route through terrain.

Bolster the Runner (Su): Starting at 4th level, a prairie runner can lend some of her amazing endurance to others. Once per day, the prairie runner can grant the Endurance feat to a number of targets equal to her class level. The affected targets can also hustle for a number of hours equal to their Constitution bonus (minimum 1 hour), before taking subdual damage (see Overland Movement, Chapter 9: Adventuring in the *Player's Handbook*).

Haste (Sp): Once per day, the prairie runner can cast *haste* on herself using her prairie runner class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action. D

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Even if druids and rangers don't figure prominently in your campaign, there are many ways to use these prestige classes in your game.

If you want to include these prestige classes as minor elements, you can associate each with a specific environment. Placing a class in a specific environment allows you to preserve its unique abilities and adds an extra element of flavor to the class's members. For example:

- Cave stalkers might only live in arctic regions, exploring and protecting icy mountain caverns.
- Fiend binders might be associated with the sea or even one large inland body of water, turning normal marine life into dangerous threats to shipping.
- Prairie runners are already associated with a specific environment, but their focus could easily change from the temperate prairie to the scorching desert or the barren tundra.

If you want to use the prestige classes as more prominent elements of your campaign, it's easy to remove or change the racial restrictions associated with each class. Here are a few variations to try:

- Villainous drow cave stalkers, who are trained to trap the unwary and take them back to their stronghold as slaves.
- Gnome fiend binders known as reconstructionists who add the half-machine template (rather than the fiendish template) to the monsters they dominate. You can find the half-machine template in issue #91 of *Dungeon Magazine*.
- An alliance of human, half-elf, and elf prairie runners known as long striders who run the distances between allied cities as messengers.

Class Acts: The Darkwood Stalker

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Bleu Turrell

Darkwood Stalker

Elves and orcs are ancient foes, their enmity dating back to times before humans walked the lands. Some elves train as elite hunters of the hated orcs. These hunters, called darkwood stalkers among the elves, pursue their age-old enemies with single-minded discipline and grim determination.

Darkwood stalkers usually come from the ranks of elven (or half-elven) rangers or rogues, although the rare elf barbarian can follow this path as well. Fighters and paladins make poor darkwood stalkers without gaining at least one level in ranger or rogue. Spellcasters rarely take up the mantle of the darkwood stalker, although druids willing to forego spellcasting can fit well into the order.

Most darkwood stalkers are affiliated with elven military units, although some are lone scouts or field agents.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the darkwood stalker.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A darkwood stalker gains proficiency with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, and medium armor.

Ancient Foe (Ex): Due to his extensive study of orcs and training in the proper techniques for combating them, a 1st-level darkwood stalker gains a +1 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks when using these skills against orcs. Likewise, he gets the same bonus to weapon damage rolls against these creatures. A darkwood stalker also gets the damage bonus with ranged weapons, but only against targets within 30 feet (the darkwood stalker cannot strike with deadly accuracy beyond that range). The bonus doesn't apply to damage against creatures that are immune to critical hits. At 4th, 7th, and 10th level, the darkwood stalker's bonus goes up by +1.

This bonus stacks with the ranger's favored enemy bonus.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, the darkwood stalker gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. At 2nd level and above, he retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.

In Your Campaign

What if elves don't hate orcs in your campaign? What if there aren't orcs in your campaign? Whatever the problem, customizing the background of the darkwood stalker is easy. Here are a few ideas to help customize this prestige class for your game.

- There are several kinds of hunters that prowl the darkwood, each with a different favored enemy. For example, darkwood avengers might target the humans who are encroaching on elf forests, while darkwood hunters stalk huge and powerful dire animals.
- Dwarves, long the enemies of goblins, train their own specialized hunters called tunnel wardens. Tunnel warden levels are identical to darkwood stalker levels except that tunnel wardens gain their ancient foe bonuses against goblins.
- Sahuagin, burning with hatred for land dwellers, train for land combat on islands unknown to the civilized humanoid races. These specialized warriors, called fangs of the sea, lead devastating raids against coastal towns and vulnerable ships.

At 5th level, the darkwood stalker can no longer be flanked, as he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies other characters the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack him. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least 4 levels higher than the character can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

At 8th level, the darkwood stalker gains an intuitive sense that alerts him to danger from traps, giving him a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks by traps.

If the darkwood stalker already had the uncanny dodge ability from one or more previous classes, levels of those classes stack with darkwood stalker levels for the purpose of determining the benefits, but he continues to progress in the ability along whichever track he was originally using for it. For example, if a rogue becomes a darkwood stalker, add together his levels of darkwood stalker and rogue, then refer to Table 3-15: The Rogue in the *Player's Handbook* to determine the benefits of uncanny dodge at his new, combined level.

Sneak Attack (Ex): If a darkwood stalker can catch an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from his attack, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the darkwood stalker's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether she actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the darkwood stalker flanks the target, the darkwood stalker's attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 3rd level and an additional 1d6 every three levels thereafter (6th and 9th). Should the darkwood stalker score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

It takes precision and penetration to hit a vital spot, so ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 feet away or less.

With a sap or an unarmed strike, the darkwood stalker can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. He cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty, because he must make optimal use of his weapon in order to execute the sneak attack.

A darkwood stalker can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. The darkwood stalker must also be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The darkwood stalker cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If a darkwood stalker gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Darkvision (Su): Although stealthy and keen-eyed, the darkwood stalker is often at a disadvantage against orcs when fighting in the darkness. Long ago, elven sages developed a ritual to allow the most dedicated stalkers to overcome this disadvantage. Now, as they grow in experience, their night vision continually improves, eventually matching the darkvision of their hated foes. At 4th level darkwood stalkers gain darkvision to a range of 30 feet, and at 7th level, the range increases to 60 feet.

Dodge Critical (Ex): Although often more skilled than their orc foes, darkwood stalkers have seen too many battles won by one lucky blow from a greataxe. The culmination of a darkwood stalker's training is learning to turn even the luckiest blow into a grazing strike. Once per day, the darkwood stalker can make a Reflex saving throw to turn a critical hit inflicted upon him into a normal hit. The save DC is 20 (if the weapon has a magical bonus to attack, the DC increases by that amount). You must be aware of the attack and not flat-footed, and you must declare your intent to reduce the effect of the critical hit before critical damage is announced. D

The Darkwood Stalker

HIT DIE: D8

Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Ancient foe +1
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC)
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Sneak attack +1d6
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Ancient foe +2, darkvision 30 ft.
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Sneak attack +2d6
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Ancient foe +3, darkvision 60 ft.
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Uncanny dodge (+1 vs. traps)
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	Sneak attack +3d6
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Ancient foe +4, dodge critical

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a darkwood stalker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.
Feats: Dodge, Track.
Race: Elf, half-elf.
Hide: 5 ranks.
Listen: 5 ranks.
Move Silently: 5 ranks.
Spot: 5 ranks.
Wilderness Lore: 5 ranks.
Speak Language: Orc.

CLASS SKILLS

The darkwood stalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are as follows:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: Hide, Move Silently, Ride, Use Rope.
Con:—
Int: Craft, Knowledge (nature), Search.
Wis: Heal, Intuit Direction, Listen, Profession, Spot, Wilderness Lore.
Cha:—

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier

Edo

Cities of the Ages

by Kenneth Hite
Illustrated by D.T. Strain

"Fires and fights are the flowers of Edo."
—traditional saying from the Tokugawa period

From fishing village to metropolis in two generations, Edo still feels like a spring city, even when the cherry blossoms aren't in bloom.

Understandably, Edo suffers from growing pains and from the boisterousness of a great trading city. The shoguns and their samurai try their best to ease the pains and stifle the rowdiness, but not even the shogun's men can contain the exuberance of almost a million people. Here the fires of poetry and prosperity burn, and any hero looking for a fight can step off the Tokaido road, stop, and smell the flowers of Edo.

History

Edo was a small fishing and seaweed-harvesting village centered on the Sensoji shrine when Toyotomi Hideyoshi, premier daimyo of Japan, granted it to his ally, the daimyo Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1590. This was an attempt to separate Ieyasu from his ancestral land and weaken a possible rival for power. Instead, Ieyasu cleverly built up his strength, noting that Edo's central location, excellent harbors in the delta of the Sumida River, and impregnable hilltop above the city made it a superb power base. In 1600, Ieyasu defeated Hideyoshi's son Hideyori and made himself shogun (military dictator) in 1603. Ieyasu's stronghold became the capital of Japan, although the emperor remained in harmless isolation in the ancient capital of Kyoto.

Ieyasu instituted a new system to maintain control; having been a rebellious daimyo himself, he decided to break their power. He decreed that all daimyo had to spend every other year in Edo and that they had to leave their families there as hostages permanently. The expense of keeping two households and traveling in style between their provincial castles and the capital bankrupted the daimyo and transferred much of their wealth to Edo and to the merchants who moved there to sell goods to the shogun's court and those same daimyo. The shogun's leading samurai, known as hatamoto (banner men), formed the nexus of the Edo Castle garrison and shogunate civil service, but the shogun's military bureaucracy, the bakufu, needed many trained clerks and administrators. As many as 250,000 samurai flocked to Edo seeking jobs, especially as the daimyo perforce reduced their establishments and the end of the civil wars left these samurai unemployed and masterless ronin. The crowded new city that sprang up was invulnerable to invasion but desperately vulnerable to fires; over 100,000 people died in the fire of 1657. Edo remains strong and solid from outside, but an increasingly rambunctious city within its walls and waterways.

"Waterways crisscross Edo in all directions; north, south, east, and west; and there are bridges, too, in numbers beyond knowing. . . . When one looks at Nihonbashi, one sees long lines of people morning and night. Just as the city prospers, one hears the feet of people and horses beating like thunder upon the bridge."
—Miura Joshin, Keicho Kenmonshu

The 25-odd square miles of Edo radiate outward from Edo Castle, which sits on an imposing hill above the Kanto plain, the Kokyo hill. Three low terraces extend from Kokyo: one to the north to the cherry-blossom gardens of Ueno, one to the southeast and the docks at Shiba, and one curving around to the south and the official lodging-town of Shinagawa on the coast. The lodging-town is more than just a place for travelers to find shelter. It serves as a center for the government's official network of transportation, communication, administration, and commerce. The fourth terrace to extend from Edo Castle, the Kanda, no longer exists—the shogun's men leveled it and dropped it into Edo Bay to create new landfill space for farmers, merchants, and townsmen to live. Ieyasu also dug new canals and moats linking the new neighborhoods and tying the Kanda River north of the Castle with the Sumida River on the eastern side of the city.

The terraces and the rolling land around them, as well as the fortified manor houses built into Edo's defenses, became the property of the bakufu and the samurai. This district, Yamanote, covers the western two thirds of the city. The landfill, especially the neighborhoods just east of the Castle's outermost moat, became Shitamachi, a densely packed district of shops, commoners, merchants, and warehouses along the Dosan-bori canal running north from the port at Shiba. Running south to north, Shitamachi comprises the Kyobashi district of carpenters, bucket-makers, and weavers, the Kajibashi district of potters, blacksmiths, and swordsmiths, and the Nihonbashi fish-market. The Nihonbashi is one of the largest wholesale markets in the city, and it is filled with people selling and shopping for goods until late in the evening.

All of Edo is divided into cho (towns) averaging 2.5 acres in size, each of which has its own distinctive trade and its own mayor, police, and firemen (very important in this combustible city). Within their boundaries, these officials have surprising independence and power, which the overlapping jurisdictions in the city help to perpetuate. Each

cho has a dozen or so ban (blocks). In Shitamachi and other commoner areas, a ban has five to ten nagaya (row houses), each with up to a hundred individual apartments. Two nagaya often share a central well with some trees; given the miniscule size of the rooms, these central areas and the city's marketplaces, wharves, and teahouses become vital social centers and stay crowded all day (and in some cases, late into the night). Other cho close their gates after dark, trading vibrancy for security.

Adventures in Edo

"The people of Edo wish to be rude; showing respect seems to them a shame. The worst offenders are those of the lowest rank. Some Edo people even make malicious remarks that one mustn't be afraid of samurai and lice. Such people lack all discretion."

—Jokanbo Koa,
Kyokun zoku heta dangi

The people of Edo have a reputation for toughness, for insolence, and for never letting a sucker (or an outsider) keep his money. This reputation draws heroes to Edo, and it certainly gives them plenty to do while visiting the city. Here are a few adventure hooks for your heroes besides those tied to the clash of kyokaku and otokodate or the machinations of the bakufu.

• Slimy footprints appear in the corridors of Edo Castle, and babies disappear from the houses of leading samurai and hatamoto. The kappa are on the loose in Edo, and this time they seem to have gotten into the city's water supply! Over 25 miles of tunnels run from the Edo Castle up to the hills around the Tama River, and another 70 run under the city and through its network of moats and canals. The roju want the kappa stopped, discreetly—the shogun must never know that his aqueduct has endangered the city.

• One way that leading daimyo, hatamoto, and even merchants gain prestige and fame in Edo is by sponsoring lavish fireworks shows. The citizens love watching fireworks displays, and any wizards or sorcerers who can make magical fireworks are in great demand, especially if their arts are novel and dazzling. Rogues are always out in full force during these displays since they provide great opportunities for pickpocketing (or even burglary). Your heroes might earn a reward for catching a thief, or they might be the ones doing the pickpocketing. Brawny characters are likely to get drafted into the fire department when a spark sets the city of wood and paper alight.

• Prankish kitsune stole one of the enormous mikoshi (portable shrines weighing over a ton) during the confusion of the spring Sanja festival. They have either somehow concealed it with an illusion, shrunk it to fit into a sleeve, or perhaps even rendered it invisible! Whoever finds the mikoshi can earn a rich reward from the Sensoji shrine—and avoid the unpleasantness that will occur if the kami who dwell in the shrine decide the theft was blasphemy.

• Perhaps it is the evil sorceries of the Christians, angry at not being allowed to proselytize in Japan, or perhaps it is the angry son of some sea god—no one knows for sure. A Spanish sailor who washed up in a wrecked ship called it "el tarrasco," but from his description, it must be seventy feet long and fifty feet tall. Before it climbs ashore and ravages Edo, it must be destroyed!

The Theater

Plays and dramas hold a central place in Edo society and culture for everyone from the shogun down to the lowliest street rabble. All citizens are able to recall both famous Noh chants and exciting kabuki stories. Prostitution (especially male prostitution by female impersonators) is rife in the backstage world of the kabuki theater, and moralizing monks and salacious storytellers alike have made the Sakai-cho neighborhood east of Hon-cho and north of the Nihonbashi famous for its sinful ways. In the theatrical life, social classes mix under pseudonyms, masks, and roleplaying unprecedented elsewhere in Japan's tightly regimented society. Kabuki also speaks to another powerful need in the people of Edo—the need for aragoto, swaggering bravura, and heroism in contrast to their reality of cruelty from the bakufu and their hatamoto. Great troupes such as those of Ozatsuma, Kozatsuma, and Kanzaburo compete for audiences with tales of heroism, courage, honor, and violence—and the greatest kabuki actor of his generation, Ichikawa Danjuro, expresses those themes perfectly despite being only fourteen years old.

LOCATIONS

Kawasaki Seki: On the southern edge of town, this seki (or checkpoint) straddles the main Tokaido road into the city. All traffic along the Tokaido must stop and pass through the seki before continuing on to Edo. The seki is a large wooden gate set in a palisaded wall, with chambers within for guard stations and holding areas. Here, guards carefully search all travelers for weapons, illegal books (such as subversive material or Christian scriptures), and smuggled goods; they question all travelers in detail to provide information on trade and production for the central government. The guards also keep an eye out for family members or retainers of provincial daimyo, who are not allowed to leave Edo without the shogun's approval. This policy helps prevent local rebellions, but it also gives all factions at least a potential presence at the seat of power.

Nihonbashi: This bridge, literally the "bridge of Japan" spans the canal running from the Edo Castle moat to the Sumida river. Here the Tokaido road ends and the Oshu Kaido road running north out of Edo begins. By decree, the Nihonbashi is the official "central point" of Japan; all distances in the country are calculated from the Nihonbashi. Stone steps lead down from the bridge to the great fisherman's wharf where barges unload vast cargoes of seafood to feed the crowded city. Just south of the bridge is the Uo-ichi fishmarket, the busiest marketplace in Edo, thronged not only with merchants but with sushi-sellers, housewives, gamblers, and street toughs. Just east of Uo-ichi is the Edobashi area; officially a firebreak, it has become a marketplace itself, selling lumber, vegetables, and manufactured goods (from soy sauce to umbrellas). Teahouses, fortune-tellers' stalls, and all manner of other "temporary" businesses fill every available corner of the space. All of these are officially against the law but too prosperous to close down.

Mitsui Echigoya: Just north of the Nihonbashi bridge lies the Hon-cho district, another merchant quarter. However, the land here is owned by

In Your Campaign

If your game isn't set on 17th-century Earth, don't worry. Edo, the ancient city of Tokyo, can fit into many different DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaigns. Here are some ideas.

- In an *Oriental Adventures* campaign setting, Edo could fill in for the capital of Rokugan, possibly at a later date, such as when the Emperor has become a figurehead for the powerful Lion clan.
- In a more traditional D&D game, Edo could be the capital of an island nation far off in the eastern (or even western) ocean. Given Japan's isolationist policies, Edo and Japan could drop into almost any fantasy world. In story terms, Edo could be the turbulent, prosperous capital of a stern military dictatorship, the restive center of a lawful evil society, or the increasingly rich and vibrant heart of a lawful good society.
- The Local Heroes section describes six NPCs, each of which is capable of spawning several subplots useful in almost any campaign. Adapting one or more to your game should be as simple as changing each NPC's name.
- The descriptions of Tokugawa Ieyasu's political manuevers can easily spark many intriguing adventure ideas. Simply credit his changes to Edo to a political figure that already exists in your campaign.

Sensoji Temple

Edo
Castle
JAPAN
City of
Edo

the roju, the shogun's chief ministers such as Hoshina Masayuki and Sakai Tadakiyo. Hence, the merchants who rent shops here must be more respectable than those in the Edobashi and Nihonbashi area. One such family is the Mitsui, whose new shop here, the Echigoya, sells silks, kimonos, and dry goods of good quality for low prices; the Mitsui have family connections in Ise province, which produces cotton and silk. At the Mitsui Echigoya, nobles and high government officials can relax over tea and snacks while their wives shop; other tonya (wholesalers) plan to follow in the amazingly successful footsteps of Mitsui Takatoshi.

Edo Castle: On the high ground above the western edge of Edo, the shogun's fortress complex dominates the city. The entire Castle area covers over four square miles, set in a concentric spiral of moats and canals, each fortified with high stone walls. The complex holds formal gardens (in the Nishi-maru, or western ring), wells and pools for fresh water, parade grounds and barracks for the shogun's hatamoto and personal guards (southeastern corner of the complex), and the homes of many high officials of the bakufu. The shogun Iemitsu initially built the Castle proper around a 100-foot-high tower, but when it burned down in 1657, the shogun had a vision that to rebuild it would mean his doom. As a result, Edo Castle is the only castle in Japan with no central tower; the defenses remain a collection of low, fortified buildings.

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Ginza: Southeast of Edo Castle and west of the Kyobashi district in Shitamachi lies the Ginza, literally the "guild of silver." This small, tightly defended neighborhood holds the shogun's silver mint, one of only three in the country. Around the mint, silversmiths and other fine metalsmiths live and work in nice houses. The Kinza, or goldsmith's district, is a few minutes' walk to the north.

Sensoji Temple: Located in the Asakusa district just north of the Kanda River, the Sensoji temple is the oldest in Edo. In 628 A.D., three monks discovered a wooden statue of the goddess of mercy, Kannon, floating in the Sumida River and brought it to this spot, where they built the shrine. When the Tokugawa shoguns made Edo their capital, they made Sensoji their family shrine and appointed its priests the overseers of all temples and shrines in Edo. The shogun Ieyasu restored the temple to its glory, centered on a five-leveled pagoda overlooking the Kanda. The towering Kaminari-mon, or Thunder Gate, separates the temple precincts from the working-class neighborhood south of Asakusa; fierce images of Fujin the wind god and Raijin the wind god flank the beautiful red wooden gateway.

LOCAL HEROES

All characters are presented as of 1673. Character levels are suggestions, and you should change them to suit your campaigns.

Hoshina Masayuki (born 1611)
6th-level aristocrat/6th-level samurai
The aging chief advisor to the shogun, this stern and unyielding statesman is a staunch believer in Shushigaku, a school of neo-Confucian pragmatism, and the moral need for a powerful, isolationist state. He mistrusts Buddhists, magicians, or other mystics as disruptive influences.

Nezumi Kozo (born 1640?)
6th-level rogue
The master thief of Edo, Kozo's network of smugglers and footpads works the docks and riverfront. He tries very hard to stay out of politics; since he doesn't prey on the daimyo and samurai, he generally gets his wish.

Sakai Tadakiyo (born 1624)
5th-level aristocrat/3rd-level samurai
A rapidly rising councilor, Tadakiyo is expected to succeed Masayuki as chief minister. Massively corrupt and intellectually lazy, his quick rise to power is the result of family connections and politics rather than merit or work. His indolence does, however, make him easier on the Buddhists and on high-profile dissidents like Banzan.

Token Gonbei (born 1645?)
4th-level fighter/3rd-level rogue
A street-fighter and commoner who learned swordsmanship and martial arts from the ronin Banzuin Chobei, Gonbei heads Chobei's old gang of otokodate ("chivalrous ones"), illegally armed commoners who protect the citizenry from ronin, lesser samurai, and other villains. He seeks revenge on Jurozaemon, who killed Chobei five years ago.

Tokugawa Ietsuna (born 1641)
8th-level aristocrat
Ietsuna has been shogun since the age of ten, and he remains childlike, weak, and easily manipulated by his advisers. He is gentle-natured and intellectual but seldom tries to prevent the repression of the Buddhist monks or the increasing taxation of peasants and merchants.

Yamazaki Ansai (born 1618)
2nd-level shugenja/3rd-level monk/5th-level shintao monk
The founder and primary supporter of Shushigaku, Ansai is a man of mercurial temper and argumentative disposition. He enters into new enthusiasms regularly and always tries to work them into his new form of shushigaku, which he and his school call shinto. His wide-ranging studies have given him some knowledge of practically every body of lore in the East.

'Neath Xarcallon's Fane

by Robert Harris • illustrated by Arnie Swekel

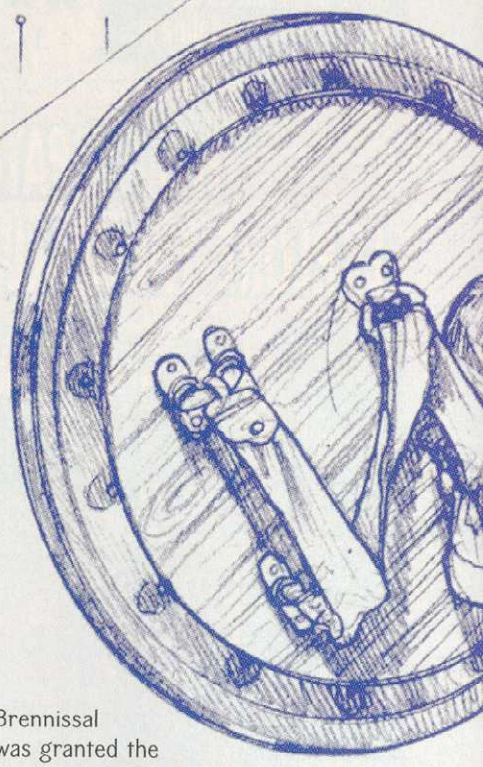
Somewhere amid the steaming pits and ash heaps of bleak Baator lies a tower of carnelian and sard called Xarcallon's Fane. Within this diabolical monument, and beyond the unspeakable horrors within, is the final resting place of a host of evil and three heroes. The mighty arms borne by the trio lie here along with the objects of their quest, forgotten by all but a few leaders of beneficent faiths.

Two decades ago, a profane alliance was forged between a minion of Vecna and a faction of baatezu led by the rogue pit fiend Xarcallon. Their goal was to strip their foes of their two greatest treasures. The relics in question—a *talisman of pure good* and the *staff of banishment*—were enshrined in the near-impregnable sanctum beneath the Cloister of Beuren. Such a theft was not beyond the combined might and wiles of Decail, the disciple of Vecna, and dread Xarcallon. Decail had seen two of the greatest priests of Vecna perish in quick succession at the hands of Beurenist clerics wielding the talisman, while Xarcallon had been relegated to his haunts in Baator more than a century before through the magic of the *staff of banishment*. It was thus that the unlikely pair forged an alliance to relieve their common enemy of its greatest concentration of holy might.

The first step in this reprisal was to penetrate Beuren and determine its weaknesses. This task Decail delegated to Xarcallon's concubine, the devious erinyes Hesthe. She infiltrated the cloister and soon discovered Fodren, a low-ranking cleric repeatedly passed over by the exarchs. It took little convincing on Hesthe's part to turn Fodren into a willing ally. The cleric was promised both the power he envied in others and the chance to avenge himself for past slights. In return, he provided the details necessary to enter the sanctum, defeat the guardians, and bypass the wards on the relics. For his complicity, Fodren was given the sickle known as *Gravetongue*.

Striking late on Harvest Eve, Hesthe and Fodren were joined by Decail and a pair of gelugons who made short work of the unlucky defenders. Most of the faithful were attending ceremonies near the cloister, and it was only through the suspicions of Brennissal, an initiate of the order, that the plot was discovered. Brennissal gathered two of her fellow Beurenists—Olm Battlesinger and the aasimar Quondi—but they were too late to prevent the theft. Fodren's duplicity was revealed, and he chose to flee with the infernals and Decail rather than face his former brethren.

Through long and diligent scrying, the exarchs located the lost relics in the realm of Baator, and they began to formulate a quest to retrieve them. After all, an affront of this magnitude could not go without suitable reprisal. *Fiendrender* and a *baton of faith* were forged to aid those sent to recover the objects. Olm bore his legendary shield *Waymaker* and an enchanted axe, while Quondi carried *Kyptal's black mantlet* and *Fiendrender*.



Brennissal was granted the *Baton of Faith* by the exarchs to complement her *guardian bracelet*.

The fate of these three heroes became bitterly entwined with those of the blackguard Decail, the pit fiend Xarcallon, and his minions, Hesthe the erinyes and Fodren the Unhallowed, in an apocalyptic conflict that brought ruin upon them all. The arms that they bore are now legendary, but to clerics, they represent a treasure greater than any dragon's hoard.

Both Beuren's legacy
And baatezu's bane—
There they lie as they fell,
'Neath Xarcallon's Fane.

Kyptal's Black Mantlet

This shield is known as *Kyptal's black mantlet*, after the warrior who first bore it. Where Kyptal found the mantlet is unknown, but he carried it for many years until he renounced all of his possessions to lead the life of an ascetic. It passed from one acquaintance of Kyptal to another until it was eventually donated to the Cloister of Beuren to further the cause of good. The exarchs added it to their impressive arsenal for the day when a worthy bearer might be found.

The mantlet was eventually bestowed upon Quondi, a planetouched half-elf cleric whose consuming passions for order and virtue made him immensely popular with the young paladins in Beuren but garnered him nothing but enmity from the denizens of Baator. When the exarchs finally succeeded in locating the missing relics, few doubted the aasimar would be chosen from among the greatest of the faithful to recover them.

Quondi bore the mantlet with pride and great skill, but his sojourn to Baator with Olm and Brennissal led to his eventual doom in a nameless vault beneath Xarcallon's Fane. The mantlet shrouds his bones just as it protected him in life.

Kyptal's black mantlet is a large round shield of dull charcoal-colored steel. The interior of the shield has a pair of thick black leather arm straps and a leather-bound handgrip. Aside from its remarkable quality, its only noteworthy feature is a 2-inch disc of black crystal set in the inner surface of the shield close to the handgrip. It performs as a *+1 large steel shield* until a cleric touches his holy symbol to the disc, whereupon its other powers are revealed. In the hands of a non-cleric, the Mantlet exhibits only this minimum enhancement.

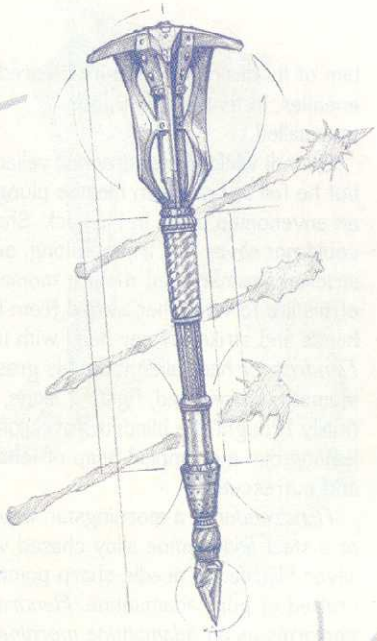
The shield has two powers, both of which are activated by touching the black crystal and concentrating upon the desired effect (activating either power is a standard action). The first power can be used three times per day. When activated, the outer surface of the shield takes on a gleaming black sheen of unusual resilience, and the shield's enhancement increases to +4 for 5 minutes. The second power can be used only once per day. When activated, the user can create a shimmering black crystal wall of stone (as the spell cast by a 9th-level cleric).

Caster Level: 12th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, magic vestment, wall of stone
Market Price: 27,090 gp
Cost to Create: 13,545 gp + 1083 XP

Baton of Faith

The Cloister of Beuren came to possess one of these magic weapons years ago, although who its original creator was is a subject still hotly debated by the master smiths who took the shattered remnants of the mace and forged it anew. The remains of this baton were entrusted to the Beurenists by an anonymous nobleman whose dying wish was for the item to be restored to its former glory rather than accumulate dust in his armory. The original was beyond repair, but its pieces formed the core of a new baton.

Brennissal was visiting the cloister to assist in the creation of the reforged *baton of faith*. It was said that she put so much of herself into the process that the Baton became almost a part of her, so it was a natural decision on the part of the exarchs to entrust the weapon (a lawful good *baton of faith*) to Brennissal. The baton saw much service in her hands against the denizens of Baator, and it lies not far from where she was struck down. At least four of these maces are known to exist, and each is keyed to one of the following alignments: lawful good, lawful evil, chaotic good, and chaotic evil. Each displays few remarkable powers to non-clerics or clerics of a different alignment. In the hands of a non-cleric of compatible alignment to the baton (non-evil for the good batons and non-good for the evil batons), the item functions as a *+1 light mace*. In the hands of a cleric of compatible alignment, the item functions as a *+2 light mace*. However, in the hands of a cleric of the same alignment, a *baton of faith* functions as a *+4 light mace*. In addition, each baton gains the enhancements that correspond with the alignment to which it is attuned. Thus, the lawful good baton functions as a *lawful* and *holy* weapon, and the chaotic evil baton functions as a *chaotic* and *unholy* weapon. In addition, the wielder gains the Spell Penetration feat while holding the weapon. All batons are made of a mithral alloy. Good weapons have appointments of hammered platinum, while evil weapons are adorned with wrought red gold.



Caster Level: 12th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic weapon*, caster must have Spell Penetration feat and must be either lawful good, lawful evil, chaotic good, or chaotic evil (weapon will match caster's alignment), *order's wrath* (lawful), *holy smite* (good), *chaos hammer* (chaotic), *unholy blight* (evil)
Market Price: 116,400 gp
Cost to Create: 59,700 gp + 4,536 XP

Fiendrender

Great arms were needed to crush the baatezu and *Fiendrender* was forged solely for that purpose. The exarchs disliked the idea of creating a sentient weapon, regardless of its loyalties. Somehow, however, perhaps through a mistake in the enchantment process, *Fiendrender* gained some kind of awareness. This unintended aspect of the weapon manifested when the morningstar was first grasped by its chosen wielder, Quondi. The aasimar reported that the morningstar alerted

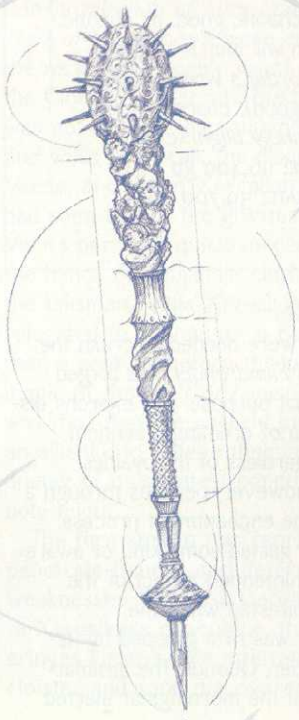
him of its desire to smite its favored enemies. In that capacity, it is unequalled.

Quondi wielded *Fiendrender* valiantly, but he fell at last when Hesthe plunged an envenomed blade in his back. She could not savor her triumph long, as the stricken aasimar used the last moments of his life to wrest her sword from her hands and strike off her head with it. *Fiendrender* had fallen from his grasp moments before and, fighting alone, finally brought the blinded Xarcallon low, leaving him a crumpled heap of ichor and putrescence.

Fiendrender is a morningstar wrought of a steel-adamantine alloy chased with silver filigree. Its needle-sharp points are crafted of pure adamantine. *Fiendrender* performs as an *adamantine morning star* unless it is grasped by a cleric of good alignment. *Fiendrender* will then send a brief mental message to the cleric describing its powers and need to defeat all devil-kind. It then acts as a *+2 adamantine morningstar of dancing.* In addition, *Fiendrender* blazes with a blessed radiance against devils and other lawful or evil outsiders, and it acts as a bane weapon against such foes. All told, Fiendrender acts as a *+2 adamantine morningstar of dancing, bane vs. lawful outsiders, bane vs. evil outsiders.* If the wielder strikes with a successful critical hit against an evil outsider, the outsider must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) or be blinded for 1 round. Finally, the wielder of *Fiendrender* can imbue himself with *divine power,* as if cast by a 12th-level cleric, on command three times per day. Any evil character attempting to wield *Fiendrender* gains two negative levels, which remain so long as the weapon is in hand.

In addition, *Fiendrender* is an intelligent, if somewhat single-minded, weapon. The morningstar has a Intelligence of 12, a Wisdom of 8, and a Charisma of 17. It is empathic and has an alignment of chaotic good. In addition, the wielder can *detect evil* at will as a standard action, and *Fiendrender* has the equivalent of 10 ranks in the Sense Motive skill. Finally, as implied by its history, *Fiendrender* has a special purpose: to destroy all lawful evil outsiders, especially baatezu. In fact, if the wearer fights for more than 4 rounds against creatures other than baatezu when such fiends are in sight of the wielder, *Fiendrender's* sentience asserts itself by attempting to escape from the wielder's grasp during each successive round to fight alone for 4 rounds. After this period, it voluntarily returns to the wielder's hand. This process repeats itself every 4 rounds. The wielder can attempt to hold onto the morningstar, but success requires a Strength check (DC 16) every round.

Caster Level: 12th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animate object, divine power, holy smite*
Market Price: 200,596 gp
Cost to Create: 104,452 gp + 7,652 XP



Guardian Bracelet

Brennissal gained her *guardian bracelet* during a dangerous pilgrimage to a lonely shrine upon the Lerech Moors. When she reached the shrine, she found it suffering from profound neglect. She also found the skeletal remains of a wandering cleric of the Beuren order and brought the wayward sister and her sole possession home to the cloister. The exarchs were grieved at the loss of one of their brethren, but they insisted that Brennissal take the bracelet as a symbol of the Beurenist's indomitable spirit.

The *guardian bracelet* worn by Brennissal was keyed to evil outsiders,

though she did not realize it until Decail and his baatezu allies struck. The gelugons accompanying Decail noticed that the bracelet had detected their presence, even though they were polymorphed and appeared to be nothing more than simple penitents. They were careful to hurry on through the crowds and into the sanctum, away from the inquisitive wizard-priestess. Brennissal became justifiably suspicious of the three. She surreptitiously followed and tried to thwart them with the aid of Olm and Quondi.

Brennissal wore the bracelet when she departed for Xarcallon's Fane, and it served her unfailingly, both as a ward in battle and as a warning device whenever the baatezu drew near. In the end, it was not the minions of Xarcallon who slew her but the lich-grasp of the dying blackguard Decail.

This magical protective device appears to be nothing more than a steel bracelet engraved with an intricate shield knot. In fact, its wearer might not even suspect it is magical until its spell effect is triggered. Each bracelet is keyed to react to a specific type of creature (aberration, animal, beast, and so on) of a specific disposition (good, neutral, or evil). Most *guardian bracelets* are keyed to outsiders or undead, although other creature types have been chosen in the past, notably by elven clerics to ward their forest homes against evil aberrations.

The bracelet remains dormant until one or more beings of the specified creature type and disposition come within 30 feet of the wearer. When this occurs, the *bracelet* automatically

emits a *shield of faith* as if cast by a 6th-level cleric. The *guardian bracelet* can activate up to five times per day.
Caster Level: 6th
Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *shield of faith, locate creature*
Market Price: 13,200 gp
Cost to Create: 6,600 gp + 528 XP
Weight: 1 lb

Staff of Banishment

This powerful and unique staff was one of the two objects that so many struggled and died to secure. The origins of the staff are not fully understood, although references to it regularly appear in aged tomes dealing with the denizens of the lower planes. Only the recent history of the staff is well known as the knowledge of its most famous owner is of great interest to the members of the Cloister of Beuren. It was the founder of their order, Naq of Beuren, who brought the various and often fractious groups and religions devoted to good under a single, common banner.

Naq never revealed how he came to possess the *staff of banishment*, but no doubt he put it to use against many unwelcome outsiders, including a half-dozen powerful tanar'ri, a trio of chaos beasts of tremendous size, one particularly officious, obstructive, and intolerant trumpet archon, and the vengeful pit fiend, Xarcallon. It is no wonder then that the pit fiend sought to deprive his hated foes of their capacity to thwart him again.

The *staff of banishment* was crafted from a branch from an ancient, lightning-scarred tree that springs from an otherwise barren and storm-whipped uncharted dimensional pocket. The 6-foot-long staff is as hard as iron, and it has carved spheres of crystal set in exquisite mounts in the middle and at each end. The mounts are crafted of some unknown steel alloy shot through with streaks of coppery metal. The staff functions only in the hands of clerics.

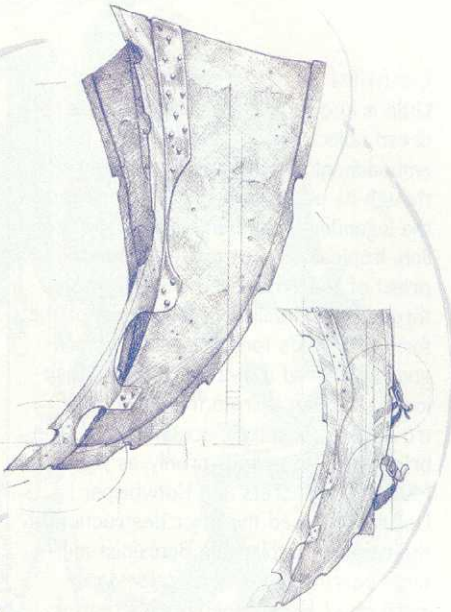
The staff allows use of the following divine spells: *dimensional anchor* (1 charge), *dismissal* (1 charge, DC 17), *banishment* (2 charges, DC 19).
Caster Level: 11th
Prerequisites: Craft Staff, *banishment, dimensional anchor, dismissal*
Market Price: 63,525 gp
Cost to Create: 31,763 gp + 2,541 XP

Waymaker

Waymaker came to fame upon the arm of the barbarian and brawler known as Hradek, who seized it from the frozen gut of a frost worm. On his death it passed to his oldest son, Krend, who was soon after driven from his homeland with his small band of retainers by his siblings.

Krend wandered south seeking assistance from former allies of his father, but he disappeared among the lonely foothills while out hunting. His retainers eventually came across the equipment of their chief, but there was no trace of their owner. Krend's weapons and armor were found cast upon the ground, and his full coinpurse was nearby. *Waymaker* was not found among his recovered possessions.

Its most recent owner was Olm Battlesinger, who reported finding it some fifty years after Krend's disappearance. He took it from the body of a hill giant chieftain whose band had been pillaging isolated communities for many years before falling before Olm and his hill dwarf allies. He knew nothing of the shield's history and gave it the prosaic name of "Olm's Plow." His exploits using the shield against the humanoids dwelling in the northern wastes had already earned him a place in history before he journeyed to Baator to recover the stolen relics of the Beurenists.



In the fateful battle with Xarcallon, Olm cast aside his shattered axe and used *Waymaker* to finish Decail. Such was his might and fury that he literally ground the blackguard to a pulp between the shield and the wall of the vault beneath the fane. Thinking the follower of Vecna was finished, he rashly pressed his attack against Xarcallon, who was finding Quondi to be a relentless adversary. Olm finally perished amid the flames with which the pit fiend shrouded himself, but not before his final rush brought Xarcallon to his knees.

Waymaker is a *+2 large shield* made from a single, rectangular seamless sheet of blued steel. The shield is unusual in that it is concave rather than convex. A razor-sharp vertical ridge runs the length of the shield, and the inner surface is well padded. Overall, the shield resembles the foot of a plow, thereby inspiring one of its nicknames. The name given to it at its forging was *Waymaker*, but this has fallen into disuse as its early history has been lost over time. When used in battle, the shield allows its bearer free use of the Improved Bull Rush feat. A bull rush attack with *Waymaker* delivers 1d6 points of slashing damage from the shield's sharp ridge. The shield's bearer also gains an additional +4 bonus to opposed Strength checks for the purposes of bull rush attacks.
Caster Level: 8th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength,* caster must have Improved Bull Rush feat
Market Price: 16,170 gp
Cost to Create: 8,170 gp + 640 XP

Gauntlet of the Maimed Lord

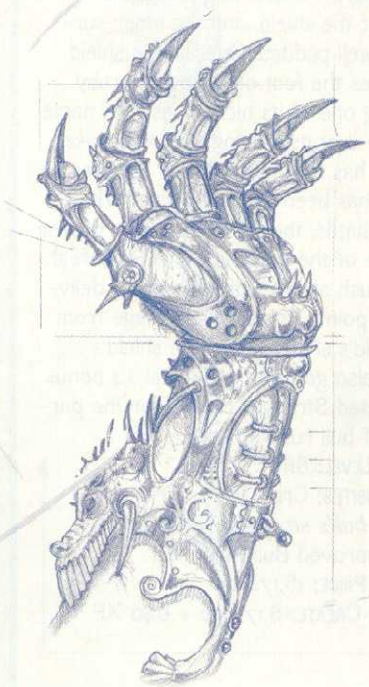
Little is known of the creation of this dread object, for it is regarded as an embodiment of Vecna himself, even though its powers pale in comparison to the legendary Hand and Eye of the arch lich. Ironically, it has passed from one priest of the Whispered One to another through the ritualistic despoilment of the former owner's tomb. Decail the blackguard acquired it in a more direct fashion by stealing it from the collective trove of his mentors, accomplished twin priests of Vecna known only as the Monger of Secrets and Rotwhisper. Decail witnessed the utter destruction of the twins by implacable Beurenist militants bearing the order's *talisman of pure good*. He escaped but thereafter swore to bring them low at any cost to himself, and he used the *gauntlet of The Maimed Lord* to prey upon anyone associated with the cloister.

Decail spent his last moments battling Olm Battlesinger, against whom he could not prevail. He managed to end the life of Brennissal before his own noxious soul fled, and the gauntlet remains locked around her ankle to this day.

The gauntlet is an exquisite, almost delicate, left-handed armored glove made of an unknown variegated greenish gray metal. It can be worn by any class but only a cleric of Vecna can recognize it and call upon its powers. When the gauntlet is donned by a servant of the Maimed Lord, it fuses to the cleric's left hand and forearm, withering the appendage to a sickly greenish-gray skeletal claw. To all non-worshippers of Vecna, the cleric's hand looks unchanged. The *gauntlet of the Maimed Lord* can only be removed after death.

The wearer of the gauntlet can make a melee touch attack to deal 1d8+5 points of damage. In addition, foes touched by the gauntlet must make a successful Will save (DC 11) or be subject to a *cause fear* spell as if cast by a 5th-level cleric.

Caster Level: 5th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *cause fear, inflict light wounds*
Market Price: 6,427 gp
Cost to Create: 3,063 gp +245 XP



Gravetongue

Gravetongue was forged upon another plane, probably one of the many layers of the Abyss. It has a long history, first mentioned in the writings of sages centuries past, but most of its existence has been spent in the treasure vaults of a powerful demon prince. It occasionally turns up on the Prime Material Plane in the hands of beings favored by dark powers.

After the last odious wielder—the cambion Drath—was destroyed in an internecine quarrel with his treacherous lieutenants, the minions of Vecna somehow acquired *Gravetongue* and entrusted it to Xarcallon. Few have lived to report its power to grant undeath to those it slays, and fewer still thought it would return to the mortal realm in the hands of a member of the holy order of Beuren.

Hesthe discovered an unexpected ally in the corruptible underpriest Fodren. The erinyes bent this tool to her will, and the underpriest willingly divulged how to bypass the wards on the sanctum. Xarcallon was pleased with this knowledge and let his concubine reward Fodren with *Gravetongue* for his traitorous services. With it, he slew several of his rivals in the cloister but retained their services as shadows after death. When his duplicity was discovered, Fodren fled with the erinyes, Decail, and the gelugons to Baator.

Years of living in Baator surrounded by nothing but spawned shadows and infernals eventually twisted Fodren into a revolting parody of his former existence. He was slain at last by Brennissal who not only rent his body with her spells but also snuffed out his blighted soul. *Gravetongue* still rests in the gaunt hand of Fodren the Unhallowed.

Gravetongue is a dull black sickle that is directly connected to the Negative Material Plane. It acts as a *+2 unholy sickle*, and each successful hit bestows 1d4 negative levels upon the target. A successful Fortitude save (DC 23) must be made 24 hours later for each level drained or else the levels are drained permanently. Any victim slain by damage from the blade or whose levels are equaled or exceeded by negative levels immediately dies and rises 1d4 rounds later as a shadow under the control of the wielder. Any cleric of a non-evil alignment who touches *Gravetongue* gains two negative levels. The negative levels remain as long as the sickle is in hand; they disappear when the wielder releases the sickle. Neutral characters gain only one negative level for as long as *Gravetongue* is in hand.

The powers of the abyss spare no effort to recover *Gravetongue* if it falls into the hands of those they consider their enemies or unworthy of bearing the weapon.

Caster Level: 17th
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *control undead, create undead, energy drain, unholy blight*, caster must have the ability to command undead and must be assisted by an extremely powerful evil outsider such as a pit fiend or balor
Market Price: 295,006 gp
Cost to Create: 147,350 gp + 11,788 XP

Miscellaneous Mishaps:

WATERY graves: sea encounters

By Dawn Ibach

Your players are expected to take a long voyage by sea or in the air. Such long voyages don't need to pass by uneventfully. Here are a few things they might encounter during the trip. Chapter 4 of the DUNEGON MASTER's Guide contains notes on running random wilderness encounters. For the purposes of the combat encounter tables discussed there, treat the areas described in this article as desolate/wasteland (a 5% chance per hour of an encounter) However, since the encounters listed here are almost entirely a matter of campaign flavor, the Dungeon Master can freely adjust that percentage when using the charts below. If an encounter is indicated, roll percentile dice and consult the appropriate table below.

Coastal Waters

Table One

01	School of small or medium fish
02	School of large game fish
03	Floating kelp with otters
04	Smugglers in rowboat
05	Ranger or druid releasing creatures from nets
06	Monster eating fish from nets
07	Land dwellers teaching young to swim
08	Romantic tryst in rowboat
09	Execution by drowning
10	Refugees in small boat
11	Merchant ship
12	Patrol ship
13	Fishing boat
14	Flock of birds
15	Sea druid in boat or water
16	Amphibian race/monster teaching young to swim
17	Flying creature-teaching young to fish
18	Barrel of rum
19	Floating chest with survival supplies
20	Corpse, land or aquatic race
21	Bottle of wine
22	Bottle with scrap of paper inside
23	Waterproof scroll case with papers
24	Rough water
25	Wineskin filled with air and sealed tightly

Table One

26	Abandoned ship
27	Abandoned lifeboat
28	Mast and crow's nest above the water
29	Coral or stone reef
30	Dead creature wrapped in fishing twine
31	Tribal canoe
32	Abandoned raft
33	Ship wreck remains
34	Leather ball
35	Wooden building block(s)
36	Floating home/house
37	Wooden door with map carved on it
38	Floating garden
39	Fishing pole wrapped in twine
40	Bottle corks
41	Cork used as fishing float
42	Piece of furniture
43	Candle(s)
44	Carved wooden totem
45	Carved wooden figurehead
46	Ship's steering wheel with scarf tied to it
47	Belaying pin(s)
48	Rope, 20 feet hemp
49	Flag, torn
50	Ship's rudder
51	Assorted fruit or coconuts
52	Oar(s), rowing or galley
53	Dead fish
54	Dead marine life with or without scavengers
55	Shoal/Sand bar
56	Sheltered cove

Table One

57	Small, rocky island
58	Inclement weather warnings
59	Uprooted tree
60	Sea ranger with mount
61	Floating island
62	Pink or black sand beach
63	Beach with seals, northern climes
64	Cliff with nesting sea birds
65	Beached creature
66	Lighthouse or beacon tower
67	Abandoned village
68	Mangrove, tropical and sub tropical only
69	Sea grass-filled lagoon
70	Adventurer on pleasure cruise
71	Flooded village
72	Wrecked lighthouse or beacon tower
73	Gambling ship
74	Two ships trading supplies
75	Ship hauling huge carcass
76	Ship with crew mending sails or making repairs
77	Ship fishing for sharks
78	Pearl divers
79	Crab trappers
80	Ship crewed by women
81	Beach comber
82	Muddy beach
83	Lantern enchanted with *continual flame* under water

Table One

84	Unmanned Ballista on cliff ledge
85	Deserted, rotting pier
86	Biting flies
87	Small ship with dead crew and otter pelts
88	Sea turtle laying eggs on beach
89	Creatures raiding turtle nests
90	Temple or Shrine to sea deity
91	Steam vent bubbles to surface
92	Ship crewed by druids
93	Jellyfish
94	Aquatic race trapped in net
95	Floating raft with sacrifice to sea deity
96	Dolphin or seal trapped in net
97	Ship with mermaid in net on deck
98	Ship running plague flag
99	Abandoned ship in lagoon dry dock
00	Roll on Deep Ocean encounter table

Table Two

Deep Ocean

01-80	Roll on Coastal Waters encounter table
81	School of Medium-sized fish
82	Dragon fishing for food
83	Sea serpents mating
84	Aquatic race battling ship and crew
85	Slave ship
86	Merchant of aquatic race seeking trade
87	Whirlpool
88	Unanchored buoy
89	Frolicking aquatic race
90	Patrolling aquatic race
91	Small island with shipwreck survivor
92	Whaling vessel
93	Sinking ship without lifeboats
94	Crew battling fire on ship
95	Religious ceremony to sea deity
96	Island of cooled magma
97	Small island populated by resting walruses, arctic and sub-arctic only
98	Overturned ship
99	Pirate ship
00	Ship disaster (roll on Table 3)

Table Three

Ship Disasters

01	Fire
02	Food spoilage
03	Fight among crewmen
04	Water spoilage
05	Omen of ill tidings
06	Saboteur
07	Rats abandon ship
08	Accident
09	Theft
	Old repair springs leak

Amethyst Dice!

Amethyst is February's birthstone. Its name comes for the Greek meaning "not drunken". It was believed to protect from the effects of wine, especially if held under the tongue while drinking. Although this is not recommended, amethyst dice may improve your game. Other stones available.

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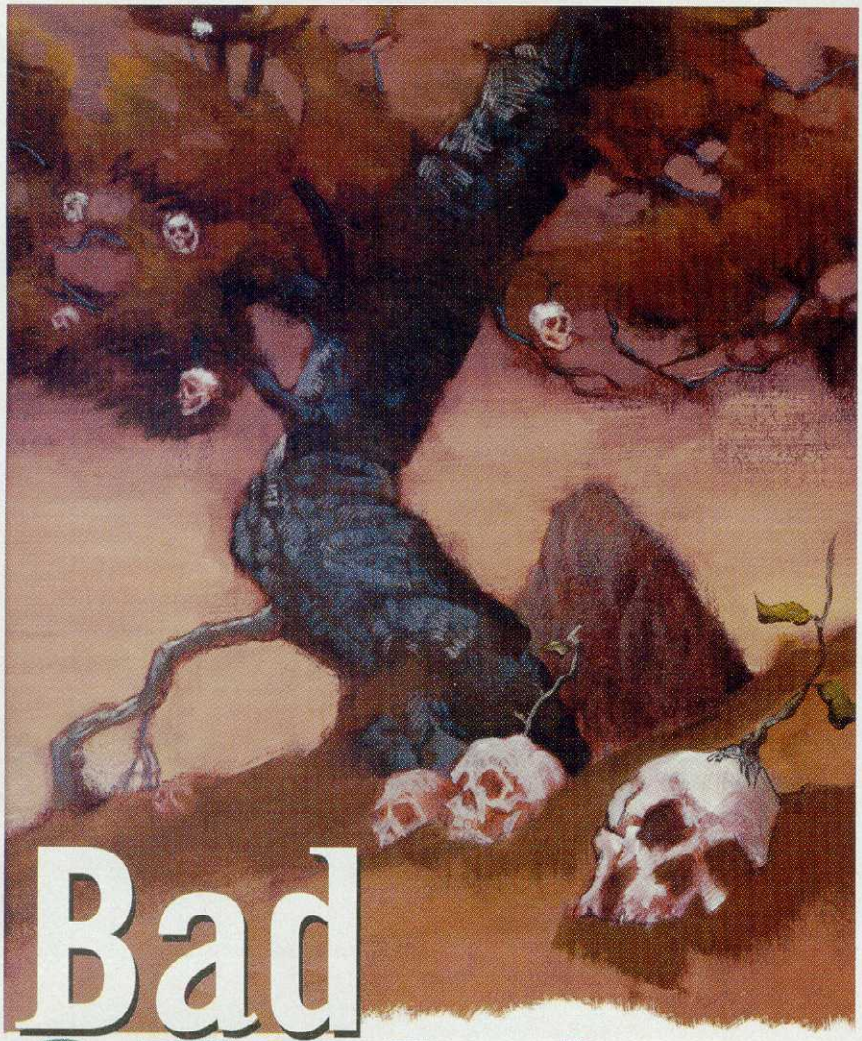


Bad SEEDS

12 Reasons Not to Go into the Forest Alone

by Ed Bonny, Steve Winter, and Skip Williams
•illustrated by Mike Dutton

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK.
Some of the material in this article might appear in an upcoming D&D product. Although we're always looking for feedback on the articles we publish, this article gives you a ready-made opportunity to participate in the development of the D&D game with our R&D department. Any comments, good or bad, should be sent to scalemail@wizards.com.

Not every tree, shrub, or plant is simple scenery, yet when most characters encounter them, they don't expect to become plantfood. Next time your players' characters take a walk through the wilds, surprise them with these new, deadly monsters. They'll never see plants in the same light again.

Death's Head Tree

Huge Plant
Hit Dice: 10d8 +50 (95 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 5 ft.
AC: 9 (-2 size, +1 Dex), touch 9, flat-footed 8
Attacks: 2 slams +14 melee; 4 seed pods +6 ranged touch
Damage: Slam 2d6+9; seed pod (see text)
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Seed pods
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/–, fire immunity, SR 19
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities: Str 28, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 1, Wis 2, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Temperate land
Organization: Solitary, pair, or grove (3-6)
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range: 10-16 HD (Huge), 16-30 HD (Gargantuan)

From a distance, a death's head tree resembles a gnarled, shaggy oak with drooping leaves. The most unusual feature of a death's head tree is its seed pod, which resembles a grinning skull.

Death's head trees are most common in places where large amounts of blood have been spilled, such as battlefields, sacrificial sites, and places where massacres have happened. The trees grow to maturity slowly, reaching a height of 15 or 20 feet in approximately 55 years. It is at this point that they begin producing their unusual fruit, growing a new crop every other year. Judging from the antiquity of certain locations where death's head trees are found, these trees are thought to live for thousands of years. As there is no recorded case of anyone cutting down a death's head tree to count its rings and determine its age, this has yet to be confirmed.

A death's head tree requires humanoid blood in order to germinate its

seeds. This blood serves no other purpose—it does not help a death's head tree grow, for instance. Blood from creatures other than humanoids has no effect on the death's head tree.

Combat

Death's head trees often lurk near roads, bridges, trails, and watering holes, where unsuspecting prey might happen by. The tree usually waits until prey comes well within the range of its seed pods before attacking, but it defends itself immediately if attacked.

Seed Pods (Ex): A death's head tree's seed pods contain a mass of tightly packed seeds. The tree can hurl the pods up to 100 feet as a grenade-like weapon. The slightest touch causes the pod to burst with a sharp crack, releasing a shower of needle-sharp seeds.

A creature struck by a seed pod suffers 1d8 points of sonic damage and 1d8 points of piercing damage from the seeds, and must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or be stunned for 1 round by the blast. Whenever a seed bursts, creatures within a 15-foot radius also suffer 1d8 points of sonic damage and 1d8 points of piercing damage from the seeds but are allowed a Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage (there is no chance for stunning).

Plant: A death's head tree is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Greenvise

Huge Plant
Hit Dice: 12d8+48 (102 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 10 ft.
AC: 16 (-2 size, +8 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 16
Attacks: 4 slams +16 melee, bite +11 melee
Damage: Slam 2d4+9, bite 1d6+4
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Death fog, improved grab, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Acid immunity, plant, blindsight
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities: Str 29, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 6

Climate/Terrain: Temperate or warm hills, plains, or marsh
Organization: Patch (2-8)
Challenge Rating: 10
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement Range: 13-18 HD (Huge); 19-36 (Gargantuan)

Greenvises are ambulatory horrors that stalk the fringes of humanoid settlements. They are not bold creatures, preferring to ambush lone prey that happen to wander nearby. These carnivorous plants actively hunt during daylight hours, repositioning themselves throughout the day if a hunting area proves fruitless. Like many other plants, greenvises are at rest during the night.

A greenvise is a larger, sturdier version of the venus fly trap. It has a thick, green trunk-like stem with four tendrils that hang like vines. When open, a greenvise's gigantic mouth is lined with teeth-like thorns; while closed, the mouth appears to be an ordinary leafy bush. A greenvise has small, tendril-like roots that it uses to move around.

Combat

After setting itself up in a location, a greenvises waits for prey to pass near. It lunges at the first living creature it senses, using its tendrils to grab the victim and place the creature into its gaping maw. An extremely hungry or seriously hurt greenvise releases a death fog (described below) to hide its location and weaken its victim. Although they are found together, greenvises do not share their prey and thus do not assist each other in combat unless many prey are present.

Death Fog (Su): Twice a day, a greenvise can emit an acidic fog similar to the *acid fog* spell except for the following differences. The death fog spreads 40 feet high and with a 60-foot radius. The death fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has one-half concealment (attacks suffer a 20% miss chance). Creatures further away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target). Creatures attempting to move through the death fog progress at one-tenth normal speed, and all melee attack and melee damage rolls suffer a -2 circumstance penalty. A death fog prevents effective ranged weapon attacks (except for magic rays and the like). In addition to obscuring sight, a death fog is highly acidic. Each round, starting when the greenvise emits the death fog, the fog deals 3d8 points of acid damage to creatures and objects within it (no saving throw). Only a severe wind (31+ mph) disperses these vapors, and it does so in 1d2 rounds. Otherwise, a death fog lasts for 3d6+1 rounds. The greenvise is not impeded by its death fog and can move and fight freely.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a greenvise hits with its bite or slam attacks it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +26). A greenvise can use improved grab against opponents at least one size category smaller than it is. A greenvise has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply hold the opponent. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals bite or slam damage (depending on which attack was used to establish the hold). If holding a creature with a tendril, a greenvise can transfer the creature to its mouth (where it can be swallowed) on a successful grapple check in lieu of damage.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A greenvise can try to swallow an opponent it has grabbed with its bite attack by making a successful grapple check (grapple bonus +26). Once inside the greenvise, the opponent takes 2d6+9 points of crushing damage plus 2d4 points of acid damage per round. A swallowed creature can crawl out of the greenvise's stomach cavity by making a successful grapple check. This returns it to the greenvise's maw, where another successful grapple check is needed to get free. A swallowed

creature can also cut its way out by using claws or a light slashing weapon to deal 20 points of damage to the stomach cavity (AC 18). Once the creature exits, the greenvise's muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed creature must cut its own way out.

A greenvise also can swallow opponents it has grabbed with its slam attack, but to do so it must first use a successful grapple check to transfer its victim to its mouth. The greenvise can only attempt to swallow one victim at a time. The greenvise's stomach cavity can hold 1 Large, 4 Medium-size, or 16 Small or smaller opponents.

Plant: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Blindsight (Ex): So long as a greenvise is within 30 feet of living vegetation, it can ascertain all foes within 60 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range or if more than 30 feet away from any vegetation, it treats all targets as totally concealed (see Concealment page 133 in the *Player's Handbook*).

Myconid

Myconids are intelligent, mobile mushrooms who live deep below ground. They are a quiet, shy, and thoughtful race. They usually make their homes far from the commonly traveled subterranean paths.

These gentle creatures range from 2 to 12 feet tall. Myconids physically resemble ordinary giant toadstools except that the lower half of their trunks split to form two legs. They have two arms that descend from just below their "cap," and they have two eyes, which are perfectly concealed when closed. Their hands have a random number of fingers and thumbs, and occasionally individuals pop up with more than two arms and legs.

	JUNIOR WORKER Tiny Plant	AVERAGE WORKER Small Plant
Hit Dice:	1d8 (5 hp)	2d8+2 (11 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	20 ft.	20 ft.
AC:	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	13 (+1 size, +2 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Attacks:	2 slams +1 melee	2 slams +2 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d3-1	Slam 1d4
Face/Reach:	2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Distress spores, plant	Distress and reproduction spores, plant
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 13	Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13
Skills:	Craft (any) +2, Hide +14, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Profession (farmer) +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +4	Craft (any) +4, Hide +10, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Profession (farmer) +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +5
Feats:	Alertness	Alertness
Climate/Terrain:	Underground	Underground
Organization:	Solitary, Pair, Gang (3-5)	Solitary, Pair, Gang (3-5)
Challenge Rating:	1/2	1
Treasure:	None	None
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral
Advancement Range:	–	–

A myconid has a life span of approximately 24 years, beginning as an infant who resembles a giant toadstool and reaching adulthood and mobility at age 4.

Combat

Myconids always view outsiders with distrust. They assume that all strangers are destructive and violent, hiding from them and fighting only as a last resort.

Spores (Ex): As a standard action, a myconid can release clouds of spores for self defense and other purposes. As it enters each new stage of life, a myconid gains a new type of spore but does not lose the previous types. Each type of spore can be used a number of times per day equal to the myconid's Hit Dice. A 3 Hit Dice myconid, for example, has distress, reproduction, and rapport spores, and each can be used three times per day. Spores can be released in a 120-foot spread or as a 40-foot ray, as noted below.

Distress: These spores can be released in a 120-foot spread. They alert all other myconids within the 120-foot spread that danger is near.

Reproduction: These spores eventually generate new myconids. They are released as a spread and have no detrimental effects on non-myconids.

Rapport: Myconids do not speak, but by using rapport spores they can establish telepathic communication with each other and with non-myconids. The effect can be resisted by a Fortitude saving throw (DC is 10 + the myconid's Charisma modifier), but resistance is optional. Rapport lasts for 30 to 60 minutes with outsiders, and for eight hours with other myconids. Rapport spores can be released as a spread or a ray. Once the rapport spores take affect, the communication range is 120 feet.

Pacification: These spores are released as a ray. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw or become completely passive. The condition is similar to being dazed, except that the subject can take partial actions that don't involve attacking. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

ELDER WORKER Medium-Size Plant	GUARD Medium-Size Plant	CIRCLE LEADER Large Plant	KING Large Plant
3d8+3 (16 hp)	4d8+8 (26 hp)	5d8+10 (32 hp)	6d8+18 (45 hp)
+1 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)
20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11	12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11	12 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 11	12 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 11
2 slams +3 melee	2 slams +5 melee; or spores +5 ranged touch	2 slams +5 melee; or spores +5 ranged touch	2 slams +7 melee; or spores +6 ranged touch
Slam 1d6+1	Slam 1d6+2	Slam 1d8+3	Slam 1d8+4
5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft
Distress, reproduction, and rapport spores, plant	Distress, reproduction, rapport, and pacification spores, plant	Distress, reproduction, rapport, pacification, and hallucination spores, plant	Distress, reproduction, rapport, pacification, hallucination, and animation spores, potion making, plant
Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +3	Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3	Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +3	Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +5
Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14	Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 14	Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 15	Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 16
Craft (any) +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +6	Craft (any) +4, Hide +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +6	Craft (any) +4, Hide +1, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +6	Craft (any) +5, Diplomacy +5, Hide +1, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +9, Move Silently +3, Profession (farmer) +5, Profession (herbalist) +7, Sense Motive +8, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +7
Alertness	Alertness	Alertness, Weapon Focus (spores)	Alertness, Brew Potion, Toughness, Weapon Focus (spores)
Underground	Underground	Underground	Underground
Solitary, Pair, Gang (3-5)	Solitary, Pair, Patrol (3-5) Work Gang (3-5 plus 3-5 workers)	Solitary, Pair, Patrol (3-5) Work Gang (3-5 and 3-5 workers), Circle (4 each of junior workers, average workers, elder workers, guards, and elder guards, for a total of 20)	Tribe (3-10 circles, plus 1 king and 5-10 zombies)
2	4	6	7
None	None	None	No coins, no goods, standard items (potions only)
Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral
–	–	–	7-12 HD (Large) 13-18 HD (Huge)

Hallucination: These spores are released as a ray. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw or suffer powerful hallucinations for one hour. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect. Roll 1d20 to determine how the affected target reacts to the hallucinations:

- 1-10: The target cowers and whimpers (target is cowering).
- 11-15: The target stares dumbly into space (target is dazed).
- 16-18: The target runs as far and as fast as possible (target is frightened).
- 19-20: The target perceives friends as dangerous enemies and attacks them (target attacks nearest non-myconid).

Animation: The king is the only myconid with animation spores. When released over a dead body, these spores begin a process that covers the corpse with purple fungus. This process lasts 1d4 days at the end of which the corpse is reanimated as a servant. This servant has all the characteristics of a zombie of the same size except it is a construct, not undead, and it cannot be turned or otherwise affected as undead. A myconid-animated corpse lasts 1d6 weeks before it stops being able to function and finally disintegrates.

Plant: A myconid is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Skills: Myconids receive skill points and feats as though they were fey.

Junior Workers

Junior workers are adolescent myconids who are 4 to 8 years old. They assist the elders with their daily chores and serve as a circle's first line of defense.

Combat

Junior workers are ineffective fighters. They prefer to hide or retreat rather than fight, and they release their distress spores at the first sign of danger. If forced to fight, they tend to rush a single opponent in a group (because they have a reach of 0 feet, they must enter an opponent's space to make melee attacks).

Spores (Ex): Junior workers have distress spores.

Average Worker

Average workers are 8 to 12 years old and form the backbone of the community.

Combat

Average workers are fairly proficient fighters. If alerted to danger, they usually try to hide and then attack from ambush or wait until more capable myconids arrive on the scene. Once help arrives, average workers use the aid another action to assist their superiors.

Spores (Ex): Average workers have distress and reproduction spores.

Elder Worker

Elder workers are 12 to 16 years old and serve as supervisors and shock troops.

Combat

Elder workers often attempt to avoid fighting by spraying intruders with rapport spores rather than hiding as junior workers do. If forced to fight, they try

to eliminate the most formidable-looking foes first. If more capable myconids join the battle, elder workers use tactics similar to the average workers.

Spores (Ex): Elder workers have distress, reproduction, and rapport spores. The Fortitude saving throw's DC for an elder worker's spores is 12.

Guard

Guards are 16 to 20 years old and are charged with the defense of the circle.

Combat

Guards are fairly aggressive in combat, at least by myconid standards, although their primary means of attack is their pacification spores.

Spores (Ex): Guards have distress, reproduction, rapport, and pacification spores. The Fortitude saving throw's DC for a guard's spores is 14.

Circle Leader

These myconids are 20 to 24 years old, and as their name suggests, they lead and administer their circles.

Combat

Circle leaders join in combat only to keep their underlings from being slaughtered. They use their hallucination spores at the first opportunity.

Spores (Ex): Circle leaders have distress, reproduction, rapport, pacification, and hallucination spores. The Fortitude saving throw's DC for a circle leader's spores is 14.

King

King myconids are 24 years old or older. They rule over their tribes and are advised by the oldest circle leaders.

Combat

Kings use the same tactics as circle leaders, except they also usually have a few zombies to order into combat. Kings tend to advance on the enemy behind a rank of zombies and/or circle leaders.

Spores (Ex): Kings have distress, reproduction, rapport, pacification, hallucination, and animation spores. The Fortitude saving throw's DC for a king's spores is 16.

Potion Making (Su): Although not a spellcaster, a myconid king can create various potions that mimic cleric and druid spells. A myconid king can create the following effects, each once a day as a 6th-level cleric or druid (but only for the purpose of brewing a potion): *bull's strength, cure light wounds, cure moderate wounds, cure serious wounds, delay poison, endurance, endure elements, greater magic fang, invisibility to animals, lesser restoration, magic fang, negative energy protection, neutralize poison, protection from elements, remove blindness/deafness, remove disease, remove paralysis,* and *resist elements.*

Myconid Society

A circle of myconids contains equal numbers of 1-5 HD creatures. Their day is rigidly structured into eight hours of rest, eight hours of work tending their fungus farms, and eight hours of melding into a transcendental, hallucinogenic, group mind state. A melding is breakable only by the detection of myconid distress spores.

Myconid tribes consist of several circles living in close proximity. The circles in a tribe usually arrange themselves so that the distress spores from neighboring circles can reach at least one member of another circle in the tribe.

Myconids encountered away from their circles are performing some mission for their superiors, usually keeping a lookout for intruders or scavenging (myconids seek refuse to fertilize their fungi beds and also prize humanoid bodies suitable for animation).

The myconid king is the only six-HD myconid in a tribe. The king organizes the circles, watches over outside influences, animates guardians for the tribe, and brews potions. When the king dies, the oldest surviving circle leader in the tribe becomes the new king.

Needleman

Medium-Size Plant
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 25 ft.
AC: 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Attacks: Needles +2 ranged; or 2 claws +3 melee
Damage: Needles 1d12; claw 1d4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Plant
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +3
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 5
Skills: Hide +8

Climate/Terrain: Any forest
Organization: Grove (5-50)
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 4-9 HD (Medium-size)

A needleman resembles a green, hairless human whose body is covered with short, stiff bristles. In fact, a needleman is not the least bit human; it is not even an animal. Needlemen are plants, and their bristles are actually needlelike thorns. They lack roots, instead taking in water and nutrients through a "mouth." Needlemen are deciduous and become dormant through the cold season. Their coloration mirrors the foliage around them: green in spring and summer, red and yellow in the autumn, brown in the winter. In human terms, they are quite thin. They have often been described as looking emaciated.

Under most circumstances a needleman's movements are slow and stately, but when faced with danger it can be nearly as quick and agile as a human.

Needlemen have no appreciable society or culture. They live in the forest with no more social organization than is possessed by trees or shrubs. Their dietary needs are satisfied by absorbing light and by eating dirt, decaying leaves, and the occasional small, dead forest animal.

Needlemen speak Sylvan.

Combat

Needlemen are not tremendous fighters at close range. They prefer to make ranged attacks, using their needles as weapons. Each round, a needleman can launch a cluster of needles from its body with a range increment of 20 feet and a maximum range of 200 feet. The precise number of needles doesn't matter, either they all hit a single target as a cluster and cause 1d12 points of damage, or they all miss (assume that high damage means a lot of needles).

Plant: A needleman is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Skills: A needleman's natural coloration and needles grants it a +8 racial bonus to Hide checks in areas of vegetation.

Orcwort and Wortling

An orcwort is a walking, bloodthirsty terror that makes its home on the fringes of populated areas. This giant plant grows humanoid-shaped fruit beings, called wortlings, that it sends out in hunting parties to bring back warm-blooded sustenance, usually livestock and humanoids. Orcworts are capable of devouring the entire population of a small village with one feeding.

Combat

Orcworts and wortlings share these plant-based qualities.

Half Damage from Piercing (Ex): Piercing weapons deal only half damage to orcworts and wortlings, with a minimum of 1 point of damage.

Plant: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Blindsight (Ex): So long as an orcwort or wortling is within 30 feet of living vegetation, it can ascertain all foes within 60 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range or if more than 30 feet away from any vegetation, it treats all targets as totally concealed (see Concealment page 133 in the *Player's Handbook).*

Wortling

Wortlings are the fruit born by the orcwort plant. A hungry orcwort dispatches up to twenty wortlings at a time to hunt for it. When a fruit ripens, it opens up to reveal a wrinkled-looking creature simlar in appearance to a small, plump purple orc. In spite of their humanoid-shaped face, wortlings cannot speak or smell. They navigate terrain using their blindsight ability. Wortlings have a life span of 1d4+1 days.

Wortling
Small Plant

Hit Dice:	3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft., Climb 15 ft.
AC:	16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +5 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d3+2 plus poison
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	–
Special Qualities:	Plantmind, swarming Half damage from piercing, plant, blindsight
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 15, Dex 14, Con 10 Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6
Climate/Terrain:	Temperate or warm plains, hills, and marsh
Organization:	Band (5-20)
Challenge Rating:	3
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement Range:	4-9 HD (Medium-size)

Orcwort
Colossal Plant

Hit Dice:	32d8+288 (432 hp)
Initiative:	-2 (Dex)
Speed:	10 ft.
AC:	12 (-8 size, -2 Dex, +12 natural)
Attacks:	6 slams +30 melee
Damage:	Slam 4d6+14
Face/Reach:	40 ft. by 40 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks:	Entangling roots, improved grab, swallow whole, paralysis
Special Qualities:	Half damage from piercing, plant, blindsight, plantmind
Saves:	Fort +27, Ref +8, Will +13
Abilities:	Str 39, Dex 7, Con 29, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8
Climate/Terrain:	Temperate or warm plains, hills, and marsh
Organization:	Crop (1 orcwort plus 5-20 wortlings)
Challenge Rating:	20
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement Range:	33-64 HD (Colossal)

When on the prowl, wortlings seek out Medium-size or smaller prey, because such creatures are easier to transport. Their tactics are simple—overwhelm, subdue, and return with the food. They fight with a great sense of urgency, preferring to gang up on one foe rather than attack enemies separately. Wortlings that manage to bring down a creature immediately carry it off to feed the orcwort, leaving the remaining wortlings to continue the hunt. They usually do not enter areas without natural vegetation, because they are effectively blind in such places.

Poison (Ex): Claw, Fortitude save (DC 11); initial damage sleep (as the spell) for 1 minute (affects any living creatures), secondary damage sleep for 1d10 minutes.

Plantmind (Ex): All wortlings within 15 miles of their orcwort parent are in constant communication. If one wortling is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If any wortling in the group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No wortling in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

Swarming (Ex): Wortlings swarm over and around each other with ease. Up to three wortlings can occupy the same 5-foot-by-5-foot space.

Wortlings are good at attacking en masse. For every wortling that is grappling a foe, all wortlings get a +1 competence bonus on attacks against that foe.

Orcwort

An orcwort appears as a gigantic, woody pitcher plant draped in thick, creeper-like vines. It is crowned with a canopy of bramble-like branches and green, bushy foliage. Dormant wortlings hang from the orcwort's branches, looking like round, oversized, prunes.

When in combat, an orcwort reaches out with its vines to entwine nearby prey. It then picks out trapped victims one at a time using its tendrils to drop creatures into its open maw. An orcwort recalls wortling raiding parties it has sent out whenever it is under attack.

Entangling Roots (Ex): As a free action, an orcwort can wrap, twist, and entwine its roots around creatures within 15 feet of itself. These creatures are then held fast, similar to the *entangle spell.* An entangled creature suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls, suffers a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity, and can't move. An entangled creature who attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration check (DC 15) or lose the spell. A creature can break free and move half its normal speed by using a full-round action to make a Strength check or an Escape Artist check (DC 20). A creature who succeeds at a

Reflex saving throw (DC 26) is not entangled but can still move at only half speed through the orcwort's roots. Each round, the roots once again attempt to entangle all creatures who have avoided or escaped entanglement.

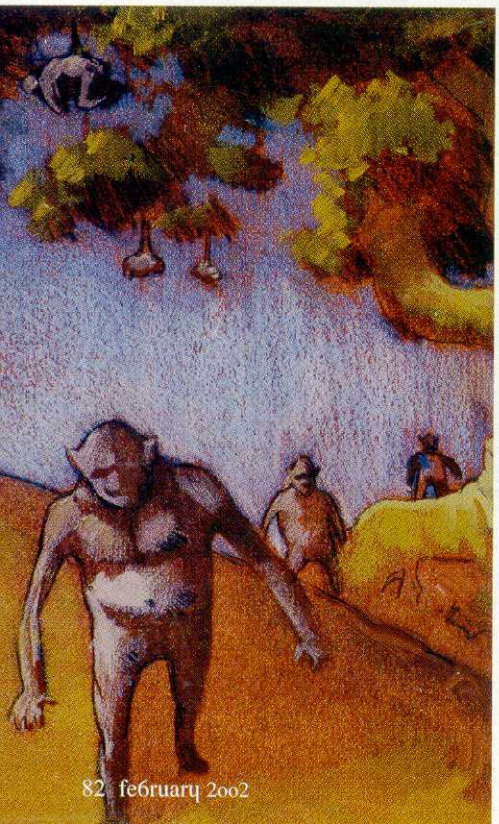
Improved Grab (Ex): If an orcwort hits with its slam attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. A orcwort's grapple bonus is +54, however, an orcwort usually holds a foe only with a single tendril, so it suffers a -20 to its grapple checks and is not considered grappled itself. This ability works only against opponents at least one size category smaller than the orcwort. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds deals slam damage. Once an orcwort holds a victim, it can use a successful grapple check to transfer the creature to its maw.

Swallow Whole/Paralysis (Ex): An orcwort can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge-size or smaller by making a successful grapple check (grapple bonus is +54). Once inside the plant's pitcher, the opponent must succeed at Fortitude saving throw (DC 36) or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. An opponent also suffers 2d8+8 points of acid damage per round. A new Fortitude saving throw is required for each round the victim is inside the plant.

A swallowed creature that avoids paralysis can climb out of the orcwort with a successful grapple check. This returns it to the orcwort's maw, where another successful grapple check is needed to get free. A swallowed creature can also cut its way out by using claws or a light slashing weapon to deal 40 points of damage to the orcwort's interior (AC 22). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole in 1d4+1 rounds; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out after the hole closes.

The orcwort's pitcher can hold 2 Huge, 8 Large, 32 Medium-size or smaller creatures.

Plantmind (Ex): An orcwort is in constant communication with any of its wortlings within 15 miles. If a wortling is aware of a particular danger, the orcwort is. If any wortling in the area is not flat-footed, neither is the orcwort. The orcwort is not considered flanked unless all wortlings in the area are also flanked.



Red Sundew

Huge Plant
Hit Dice: 15d8+75 (142 hp)
Initiative: -1 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft.
AC: 11 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 11
Attacks: 4 slams +18 melee
Damage: Slam 2d6+9 and acid
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, sticky acid
Special Qualities: Immunities plant, blindsight
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +4, Will +6
Abilities: Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm forests
Organization: Patch (2-5)
Challenge Rating: 13
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 16-28 HD (Huge), 29-45 HD (Gargantuan)

Red sundews are vicious predators that roam forested areas hunting for unwary prey. Unlike many carnivorous plants, red sundews are highly nomadic and rarely remain in one area for long. Mostly found in coastal forests and hot jungles, the migratory red sundew can also be seen in cooler woodlands far from these wet areas.

A red sundew looks like a wide mound of tangled red, green, and rust colored rags, measuring almost 20 feet high and 10 feet across. These rags are actually rope-like vines that are coated in a sweet-smelling goo, giving the plant a slick, wet appearance. Underneath the mass of vines, a red sundew has a single stem 12 feet high and 5 feet across supported by two leg-like appendages that grant the plant its fairly quick movement rate.

Combat

Red sundews are aggressive hunters, slapping their tentacles firmly around prey to prevent any escape. Multiple red sundews often travel together, and they combine their efforts when hunting. These carnivorous plants flee when more than half their number has been slain.

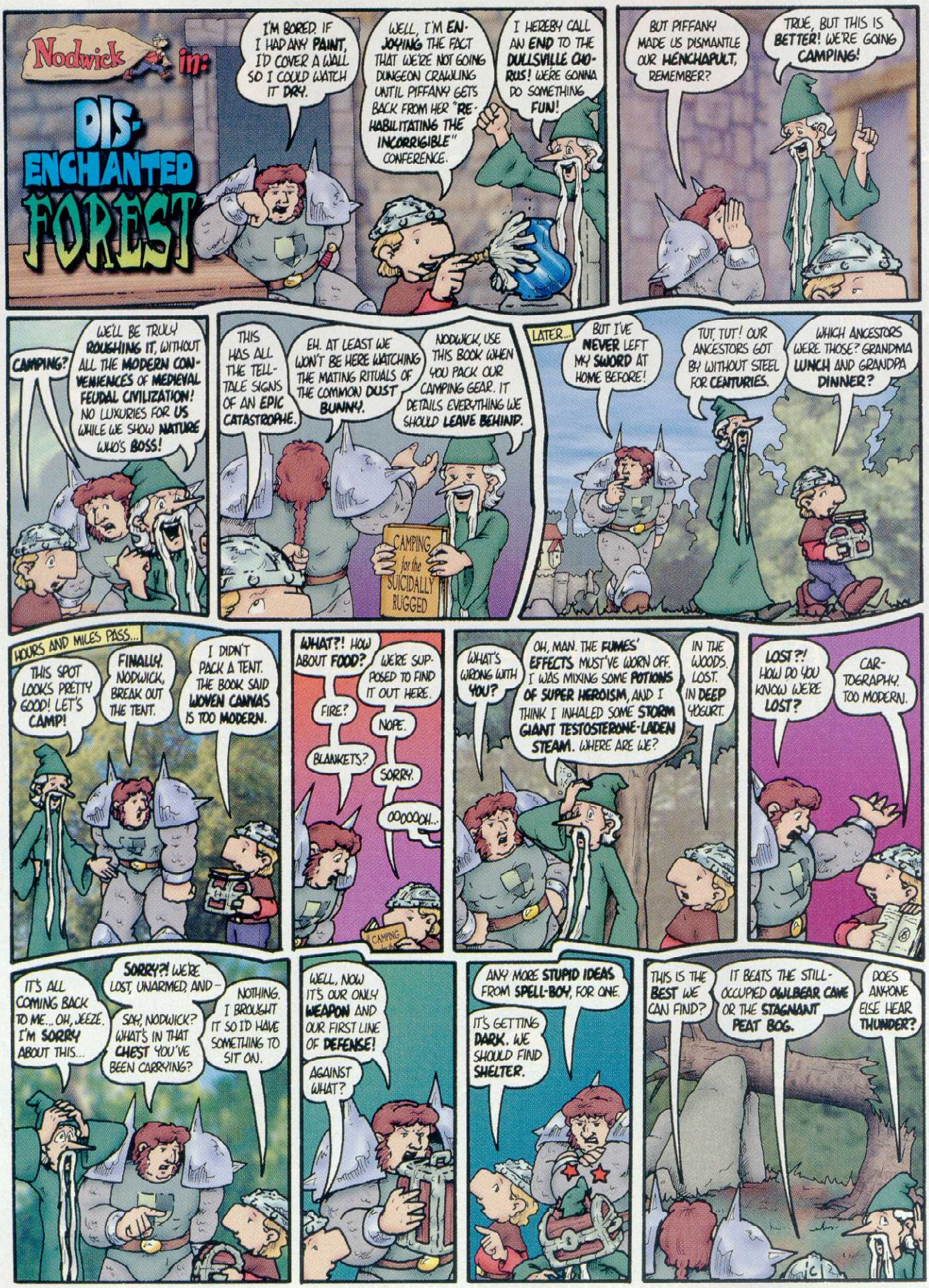
Improved Grab (Ex): If a red sundew hits with its slam attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. The red sundew's grapple bonus is +30; however, the red sundew usually holds the opponent with only one tentacle, so it suffers a -20 to its grapple check and is not considered grappled itself. The red sundew has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply hold the opponent. Each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals slam damage. This ability works only on foes at least one size category smaller than the red sundew.

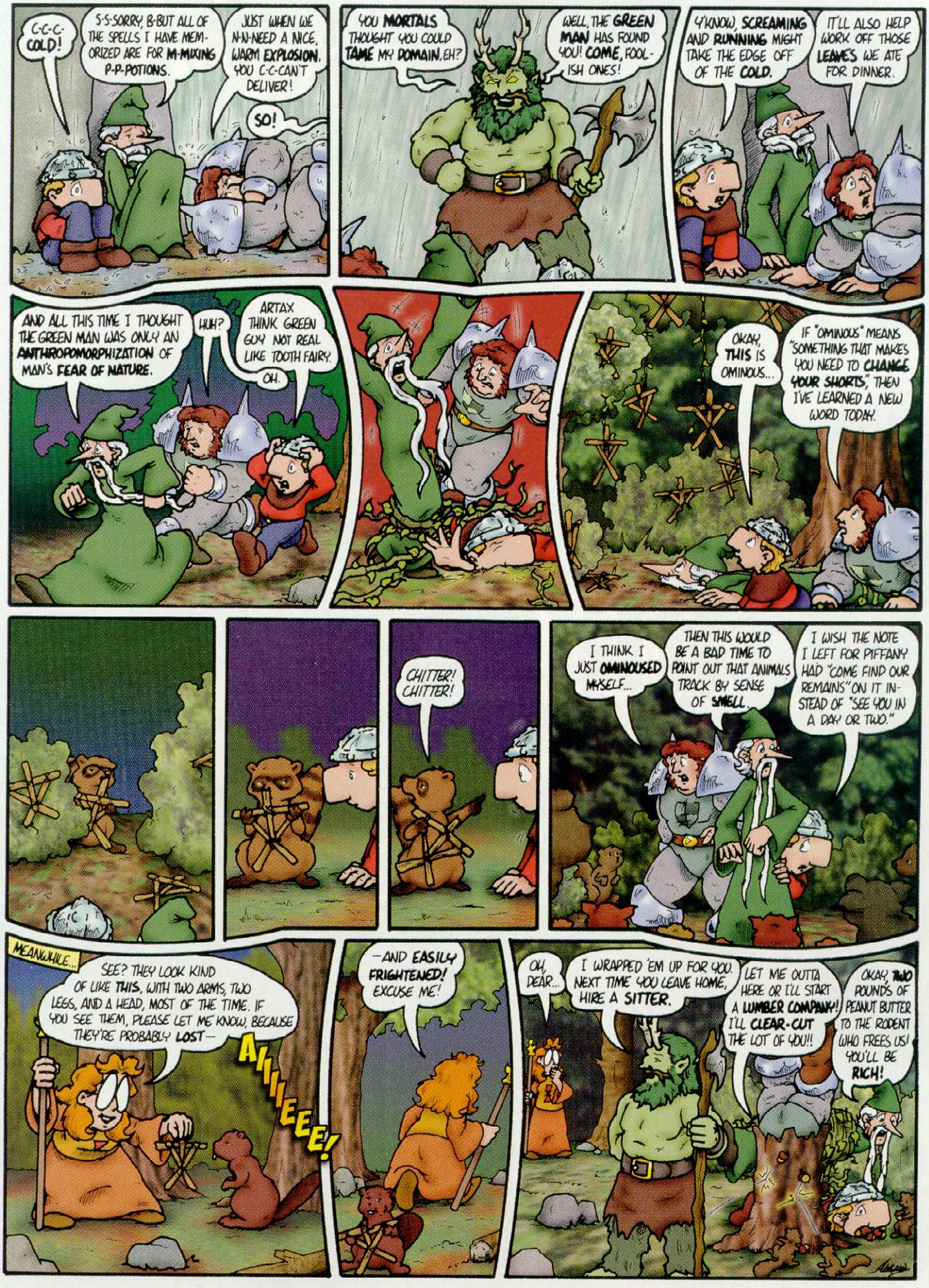
Sticky Acid (Ex): Red sundews are coated in thick, acidic goo. A hit by a red sundew or touching one with an unarmed attack or natural weapon deals 1d6 points of acid damage for 1d4+1 rounds. Sticky acid cannot be scraped off, but a large quantity of water (at least one gallon) washes it off.

Immunities (Ex): Red sundews are immune to fire and acid effects.

Plant: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing; not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing effects; low-light vision.

Blindsight (Ex): So long as a red sundew is within 30 feet of living vegetation, it can ascertain all foes within 60 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range or if more than 30 feet away from any vegetation, it treats all targets as totally concealed (see Concealment page 133 in the *Player's Handbook*).


Nodwick in:
DIS-ENCHANTED FOREST
I'M BORED. IF I HAD ANY PAINT, I'D COVER A WALL SO I COULD WATCH IT DRY.
WELL, I'M ENJOYING THE FACT THAT WE'RE NOT GOING DUNGEON CRAWLING UNTIL PIFFANY GETS BACK FROM HER "REHABILITATING THE INCORRIGIBLE" CONFERENCE.
I HEREBY CALL AN END TO THE DULLSVILLE CHORUS! WE'RE GONNA DO SOMETHING FUN!
BUT PIFFANY MADE US DISMANTLE OUR HENCHAPULT, REMEMBER?
TRUE, BUT THIS IS BETTER! WE'RE GOING CAMPING!
CAMPING?
WE'LL BE TRULY ROUGHING IT, WITHOUT ALL THE MODERN CONVENIENCES OF MEDIEVAL FEUDAL CIVILIZATION! NO LUXURIES FOR US WHILE WE SHOW NATURE WHO'S BOSS!
THIS HAS ALL THE TELL-TALE SIGNS OF AN EPIC CATASTROPHE.
EH. AT LEAST WE WON'T BE HERE WATCHING THE MATING RITUALS OF THE COMMON DUST BUNNY.
NODWICK, USE THIS BOOK WHEN YOU PACK OUR CAMPING GEAR. IT DETAILS EVERYTHING WE SHOULD LEAVE BEHIND.
CAMPING for the SUICIDALLY RUGGED
LATER...
BUT I'VE NEVER LEFT MY SWORD AT HOME BEFORE!
TUT, TUT! OUR ANCESTORS GOT BY WITHOUT STEEL FOR CENTURIES.
WHICH ANCESTORS WERE THOSE? GRANDMA LUNCH AND GRANDPA DINNER?
HOURS AND MILES PASS...
THIS SPOT LOOKS PRETTY GOOD! LET'S CAMP!
FINALLY. NODWICK, BREAK OUT THE TENT.
I DIDN'T PACK A TENT. THE BOOK SAID WOVEN CANVAS IS TOO MODERN.
WHAT?! HOW ABOUT FOOD?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FIND IT OUT HERE.
FIRE?
NOPE.
BLANKETS?
SORRY.
OOOOOOH...
CAMPING
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
OH, MAN. THE FUMES' EFFECTS MUST'VE WORN OFF. I WAS MIXING SOME POTIONS OF SUPER HEROISM, AND I THINK I INHALED SOME STORM GIANT TESTOSTERONE-LADEN STEAM. WHERE ARE WE?
IN THE WOODS. LOST. IN DEEP YOGURT.
LOST?! HOW DO YOU KNOW WE'RE LOST?
CARTOGRAPHY. TOO MODERN.
IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME... OH, JEEZE. I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS...
SORRY?! WE'RE LOST, UNARMED, AND—
SAY, NODWICK? WHAT'S IN THAT CHEST YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING?
NOTHING. I BROUGHT IT SO I'D HAVE SOMETHING TO SIT ON.
WELL, NOW IT'S OUR ONLY WEAPON AND OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE!
AGAINST WHAT?
ANY MORE STUPID IDEAS FROM SPELL-BOY, FOR ONE.
IT'S GETTING DARK. WE SHOULD FIND SHELTER.
THIS IS THE BEST WE CAN FIND?
IT BEATS THE STILL-OCCUPIED OWLBEAR CAVE OR THE STAGNANT PEAT BOG.
DOES ANYONE ELSE HEAR THUNDER?


C-C-C-COLD!
S-S-SORRY, B-BUT ALL OF THE SPELLS I HAVE MEMORIZED ARE FOR M-MIXING P-P-POTIONS.
JUST WHEN WE N-N-NEED A NICE, WARM EXPLOSION, YOU C-C-CAN'T DELIVER!
SO!
YOU MORTALS THOUGHT YOU COULD TAME MY DOMAIN, EH?
WELL, THE GREEN MAN HAS FOUND YOU! COME, FOOLISH ONES!
Y'KNOW, SCREAMING AND RUNNING MIGHT TAKE THE EDGE OFF OF THE COLD.
IT'LL ALSO HELP WORK OFF THOSE LEAVES WE ATE FOR DINNER.
AND ALL THIS TIME I THOUGHT THE GREEN MAN WAS ONLY AN ANTHROPOMORPHIZATION OF MAN'S FEAR OF NATURE.
HUH?
ARTAX THINK GREEN GUY NOT REAL LIKE TOOTH FAIRY.
OH.
OKAY, THIS IS OMINOUS...
IF "OMINOUS" MEANS "SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR SHORTS," THEN I'VE LEARNED A NEW WORD TODAY.
CHITTER! CHITTER!
I THINK I JUST OMINOUSED MYSELF...
THEN THIS WOULD BE A BAD TIME TO POINT OUT THAT ANIMALS TRACK BY SENSE OF SMELL.
I WISH THE NOTE I LEFT FOR PIFFANY HAD "COME FIND OUR REMAINS" ON IT INSTEAD OF "SEE YOU IN A DAY OR TWO."
MEANWHILE...
SEE? THEY LOOK KIND OF LIKE THIS, WITH TWO ARMS, TWO LEGS, AND A HEAD, MOST OF THE TIME. IF YOU SEE THEM, PLEASE LET ME KNOW, BECAUSE THEY'RE PROBABLY LOST—
AHHHEEE!
—AND EASILY FRIGHTENED! EXCUSE ME!
OH, DEAR...
I WRAPPED 'EM UP FOR YOU. NEXT TIME YOU LEAVE HOME, HIRE A SITTER.
LET ME OUTTA HERE OR I'LL START A LUMBER COMPANY! I'LL CLEAR-CUT THE LOT OF YOU!!
OKAY, TWO POUNDS OF PEANUT BUTTER TO THE RODENT WHO FREES US! YOU'LL BE RICH!

Mind flayers

no. 31

by Mike Selinker

Get ready for a fluency test. There are 32 D&D languages listed below, all from the *Player's Handbook* and *Monster Manual*. Their letters have been magically transformed into other letters, but there's a twist. The languages below are actually two separate word lists of 16 languages, each of which was encoded independently. Then the two lists were mixed together. So if A stands for Z in one entry, it'll stand for Z in exactly 16 entries—and probably for something else in the other 16. Hope you've got that *helm of comprehending languages and reading magic* handy!

E G T - Q T X V
F S Y S B Q K X Y
N P Y X X
M K X D X Q P N
O N T J
L J M Y X R J S
T E X G K P
B M D K V C
X Z G X V
H Y S N
W T N P K X V
Y S W
R H K S G J P
L X Q P V R Y N
F T P P T V
E F K P - Z Q
Z J S S K P
K H V X V
N Q K P Z
T X K K R
O N G K O K F
F P R J S W Y C C Y P
X G N X V
K V W S N V X Y
Q N S X V Q
R S K W Y P Q W
G P A S N D G Y E
S Y I S V
H T A Y K V
K L E T T K X
X A T Y S Q D
N P Y C J

MIND BLAST

In the *Monster Manual*, what nine-letter word in the shield guardian's special qualities is one letter different from a word in the neighboring shambling mound's special attacks?

You can find the solution to this MIND BLAST on page 107

no. 30 SOLUTION

The statements were made in this order: 6 (Eric), 3 (Alan), 1 (Nate), 8 (Ward), 5 (Eric), 4 (Eric), 7 (Ward), 2 (Barbra), and 9 (Nate). A fair amount of other chatter happened in between those statements.

Though not all the classes are listed, the names lead you to a cleric, a barbarian, a wizard, a paladin, and (though not a class) the Dungeon Master.

Alan, who played Arban the wizard, rolled an 18 initiative, but readied an action. His initiative dropped to 8. He cast his *silent image*, though not with the result he wanted since Alan didn't understand the rules for standard actions.

Nate, who played Palin the cleric, rolled a 13 initiative. He uninspiringly cast *sanctuary* on himself, and then went after the Chee-Tos.

Ward, who played Ugnast the barbarian, rolled a 9 initiative. He moved and attacked Izar (but could not take a five-foot step afterward).

Eric, the Dungeon Master, rolled a 7 for Izar the bugbear's initiative (which now goes after Arban's 8). Izar flattened Ugnast.

Barbra, who played Ceri the paladin, rolled a 4 initiative. She used her *lay on hands* ability on Ugnast.

Nate then came back with the Chee-Tos.

The Sleeping Dragon

by Ed Greenwood · Illustrated by David Day

The Evermoors of Faerûn's Sword Coast North are studded with countless fissures: narrow, winding vertical-sided "rock cuts" carved through the rock by flowing water over many years (and widened by winter ice). Caverns among the fissures serve as shelter for trolls, giants, and other moor denizens. Most Evermoor fissures have small, shallow springs running along their bottoms—or at the very least, stagnant rainwater pools. Only a handful of these "hidden ways" of the Evermoors are wider than twenty feet or so—and almost all such clefts are permanently inhabited.

One notable exception is a wooded ravine due west of Everlund (five days' travel, some say, but moor perils and rough terrain make many journeys hard and long). It's a thick, gloomy forest of shadowtops and duskwoods, inhabited by many small birds and scuttling furred creatures. Predators larger than a fox seem absent from this winding, three-mile-long ravine, and this might be due to the presence of an unknown guardian magic. This has given the isolated valley a reputation for being haunted and kept it from becoming the abode of trolls or giants.

Called "Dragon Wood" by those that know of it, the forest has one area bare of trees at its midpoint, where rocks rise in a ridge that resembles the curved, spiny back of some giant earth-burrowing serpent. The center of Dragon Wood also holds one of the oddities of the modern-day Sword Coast North: the Sleeping Dragon.

Despite its name, this feature isn't a dragon at all, but an egg-shaped stone that floats in the air, unmoved by winds and all spells that have yet been tried against it. It was long thought to be an unhatched dragon's egg, a belief still common in the North.

The Sleeping Dragon is shaped like a large, long potato: a rough ovoid with its long axis horizontal, approximately twenty feet long and a little less than ten feet thick. It floats in a fixed spot as the years pass, its lowest point about ten feet off the ground (various persons investigating the Dragon have piled up rocks beneath it so as to reach it, without apparent harm—winter winds, snows, and runoff invariably scatter such piles in a season or so).

A little moss grows on the Dragon, and years of harsh winters have caused it to crumble in small ways here and there, but it exhibits no large cracks or breaks, and it seems to be protected against the full fury of the elements.

The Dragon is fashioned from a single piece of unidentified dark stone (the stone does not match any surrounding Evermoor stone). Its exterior was carved long ago into a seemingly abstract design of sweeping curves and flourishes, sculptings that in some places reach a depth of a foot or so and cover most of the rock's exterior. These carvings help to conceal at least three hatch-like "doors" in the stone: oval stone domes that can be shifted sideways to release cunningly carved stone catches and then swung open to allow access to hollows in the interior of the floating stone.

Over the years, the most distinctive features of the Dragon's carvings have acquired names: the Splendor refers to the axis of a pinwheel of whirling flames or lines of force atop one end of the floating stone, and the three doors, in ascending order of size, are known as the Wink, Darkhole, and the Wizard's Door.

The Splendor

No one has yet discovered the purpose of this dimple in the Dragon. Over the years, some folk have reported that touching a magic item to it caused the item to erupt with strange, wondrous discharges of random effect, to be drained, or to be infused with great power—or, more often, that nothing at all occurred.

A few insist that touching the Splendor when the right words were uttered, or with a magic item, caused a faintly glowing field of tingling magical force to appear between the floating stone and the rocks beneath it, which lasted 24 hours from its initial appearance and combined the effects of a *ring of sustenance* and a *ring of warmth*—a field that couldn't be called up again on that visit to the Dragon no matter what means were tried.

The Wink

This smallest of the Sleeping Dragon's doors is perhaps three feet long and half that across. If slid up and to the right, it clicks outward as a catch is released. The Wink has a concave interior surface; in this hollow is a crossbar of stone sporting ten cylindrical storage cavities. Four of these are customarily empty, but the other six hold wood-stoppered, sealed vials of frosted glass. The seals and the wood are magically preserved, and the vials contents are assumed to be magic potions, although their types are unknown.

Several adventuring bands report taking all of the vials, so either magic or an entity replaces vials from time to time. There seems no agreement among reports of vials occupying particular storage holes always having the same effects—or even that vial contents gained on one occasion share any properties at all with those acquired on another.

All explorers of the Dragon agree that considerable time seems to elapse between vial appearances. This seems particularly true if an individual or band lingers in the vicinity of the Dragon, checking the Wink repeatedly. In at least two instances, an adventuring band arrived while observed by a group that had already gained potions—and found potions in the door that had definitely been empty only a short time before.

The Wink opens into a small, rounded cavity three feet wide, a bit more than a

foot high, and a little more than four feet deep. It's usually filled by a chest (if taken away by plundering adventurers, the chest—or its duplicate—magically returns after two tendays or so). This rectangular, heavy duskwood chest seems new and is tarred to seal against moisture. All of its corners are bound with iron strips, and its arch-topped wooden lid bears similar protections. Two large, comfortable carry-handles are affixed on swivel-sockets on either end of the chest, and it's held closed with three large claw-locks whose keys are almost always found projecting from the keyholes.

The contents of this chest, judging by reports, can be just about anything, but certain items seem more common. How the chest gets refilled and where the items come from remain mysteries.

Darkhole

This Dragon door measures four feet horizontally and just over two feet in height. If slid to the opener's left, it can be swung open to the left, turning in a loose socket (that allows it to be removed entirely). Although supported on a massive lip that's part of the surrounding carving, this door has been dropped to the rocks below many times. If anyone has broken it, magic or a mysterious attendant repairs and replaces it. The inside surface of this door is smooth, featureless stone.

The "Darkhole" behind the door is so named because this word is an old slang term for a burial cavity in a tomb wall or catacomb, and the cavity behind this door is admirably sized for such purposes: just under four feet wide and two feet high, it stretches six-and-a-half feet back into the stone: just room enough to hold a tall human body close-wrapped in a shroud.

On several occasions, explorers have found it to have been used for such purposes. At other times, bones have been found here—and even intact, undead skeletons with magical powers that attacked adventurers disturbing them!

The Wizard's Door

This largest of the Sleeping Dragon's doors is three feet across and seven feet along its longest axis. If pushed inward in the proper two places simultaneously, a complicated series of catches swivel aside, allowing it to be pushed in along one edge, and so swung open along the opposing edge.

The cavity beyond is a small, cramped room in the heart of the Dragon, shaped to form a tall-human-sized reclining couch with a small open footspace at its end. Above the couch, two shelves have been carved out of the sloping stone ceiling. One customarily sports an array of bottles and decanters of various sizes and shapes (drinking water and wines). The other holds three fat tomes lying on their sides and a lantern.

The lantern is a tiny, squat, flat-topped iron cylinder with a rooftop hanging-loop and three embossed iron feet. A door in its pierced sides allows access to the interior—which holds not a candle, but a magical glowing sphere (a tiny globe-shaped region of always-luminescent air).

The books are impressive affairs that sport locks, ribbon bookmarks, and metal corner-caps. Their pages are parchment and are sometimes found to be blank. At other times, they bear (often rare or hitherto-unknown) wizard spells. One wizard reported finding a useful spell in each book and spending hours copying them—a wise tactic, because these books always vanish some short time after being taken away from Dragon Wood, only to reappear on their shelf, with different contents.

Many explorers have reported seeing a single, disembodied human eye floating alone in the air above the couch, glowing with a faint, pale white radiance, and staring at approaching creatures. It's insubstantial, seems unaffected by measures against undead, and usually vanishes soon after being seen—but folk who've run their hands through where it floats sometimes report receiving visions or whispered messages (and in at least one instance, gained a fell sentience that "rode" their mind for years, suggesting that they do certain things, and whispering to them in their dreams). D

Elminster's Notes

Tharauvon Embril, know ye, was born in what's now Toralth in Tethyr some 1200 years ago. A vigorous, handsome sort, he disappeared near Ascore thirty-some years later. His symbol, a circle with a shallow "V" to the upper left and another to the lower right (two birds a-wing around the sun), can still be found scratched on rocks in wilderland lookouts and passes all o'er the Sword Coast North. There are the usual tales of great treasure amassed by him and hidden away in the wilds after a few thefts, but what I recall most being told by an old elf who knew him was that Tharauvon lost the two smallest fingers of his left hand and had a dwarf fashion an elaborate gauntlet, two fingers of which were enspelled to serve as wands. What sort of wands, now, the elf—Raulivyl Larathryl, by name, gone to Evermeet long ago—knew not, and cared less. He said that Tharauvon was less than sane toward the end, and sought "a beast that could join with a man, two bodies becoming one, and so cheat the ravages of time to live forever."

The looks of the rock ridge underlying the floating stone do resemble the petrified body of some gigantic burrowing worm, but many folk have taken the trouble to dig and hew rock over the years to see if this is indeed their origin. Much as it pains me to dash minstrels' hopes, it must be said this much has been clearly learned: the curving ridge is simply rock, not a creature—petrified or otherwise—at all. Nor is the floating stone a dragon's egg, or ever was.

Large animals do not live near the place because they are whisked away by some teleportation magic. 'Tis my belief that both the teleport effect active in Dragon Wood and the Sleeping Dragon itself are the creation of the same long-ago spellcaster or cabal of mages who fashioned the floating stone as a refuge of sorts for secluded study, a hide-away, as a place to rest in stasis, or as a tomb. The carver and enchanter is that famous, tirelessly-energetic individual known to lore as "Unknown Hands," and 'tis my belief that he, she, it, or the collection of entities who fashioned this floating stone also gave it some as-yet-unrevealed destiny, future purpose, or still-hidden power. Betimes the ravine glows from end to end with dangerous witchfire—or thrums with unearthly song.

What I can tell ye is that anyone who strikes the rock hard, or directs magic of any sort against it, is instantly "snatched" elsewhere (some folk refer to this as "being grabbed by the ghost," but the only hauntings I've ever encountered in Dragon Wood are "weave whispers:" snatches of ghostly voices from elsewhere (and usually elsewhen) that speak intriguing fragments to passing ears.

The Sleeping DRAGON

Dragon Wood

The Dragon Wood is a quiet, mysterious place. There's an almost tangible aura of magic within. Should someone cast *detect magic,* they discover a Transmutation effect fills the wood. Animals and beasts of Medium-size or larger must make a Will saving throw each round (DC 20) or be teleported to a random location 50 to 500 miles away.

Whispers Heard In Dragon Wood

- "The wyrm! The wyrm comes!"
- "For the Sorceress of the Snows is most to be feared . . ."
- "The seventh hand upon the door opens all . . ."
- "Phulvaerus is the one you seek."
- "The skull's green eye watches unblinking."
- "By night, seek her in the Moon Turret."
- "There is yet another moonblade, this one flying awake and aware."

The Splendor

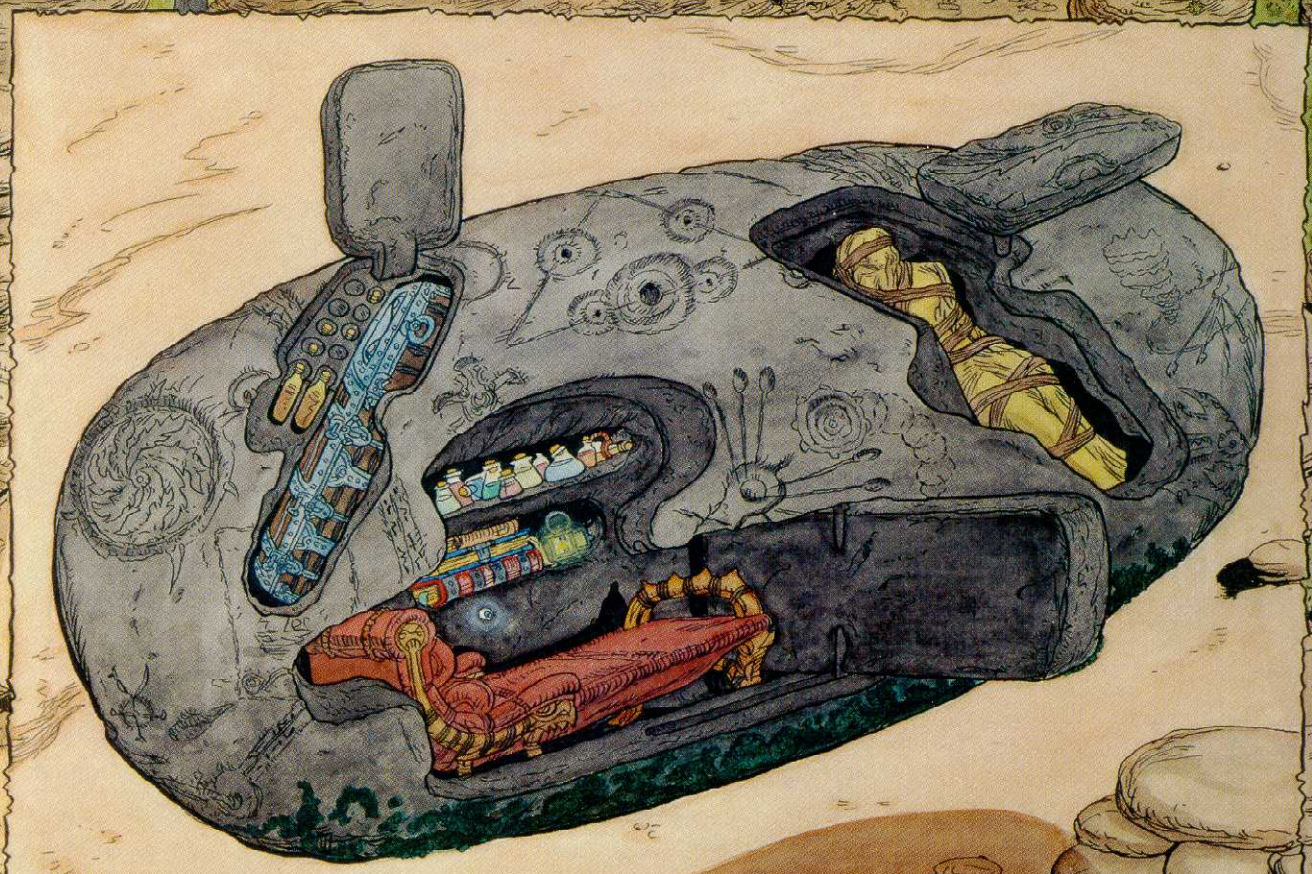
Most of the rumored "powers" of this part of the Sleeping Dragon are the result of a mischievous group of pixies who live in the Dragon Wood. The field of force effect works exactly as discussed above, draining a charge from a charged item to provide warmth and sustaining energy to creatures beneath the rock.

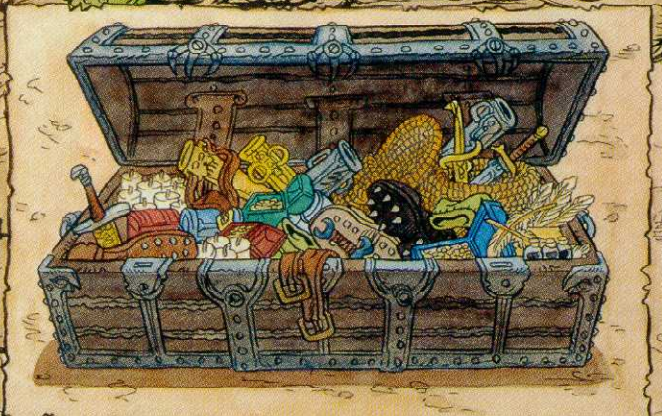
Darkhole

A successful Search check (DC 16) locates the Darkhole door. The contents of this portion of the Sleeping Dragon are, like most of the mysterious powers of the Splendor, the result of the clan of pixies that live nearby. They enjoy scaring investigators with illusions of what they expect to see. However, sometimes even the pixies are surprised to find real bones or true undead contained within.

The Wizard's Door

A successful Search check (DC 14) locates the Wizard's Door. The lantern is simply a normal lantern with a *continual flame* spell cast inside. It returns to the hole by mysterious means 1d4 days after being taken or destroyed. The spells contained in the books (if they are there at all) are randomly chosen by whatever mysterious force created the Sleeping Dragon. The glowing eye that appears is a manifestation of the god Savras, master of Divination. He checks the room behind the Wizard's Door from time to time, looking for worthy and willing wizards to be his servants in Faerûn.





The Wink

A successful Search check (DC 17) locates the Wink's door. Roll on Table 8-18 Potions in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to find out which potions are available when the door is first opened.

Common Contents of the Wink Chest (roll 1d8)

1. Three 60-foot lengths of waxed hemp rope
2. About 100 split "kindling slivers" of dry, seasoned duskwood
3. Two dozen scabbards, belts, and baldrics
4. Six pairs of stout, high, hard leather hobnailed boots
5. Three bottles of ink, five feather quills, and 40 sheets of parchment
6. About 3,000 bone buttons, varying sizes and styles
7. Sixteen steel daggers, sharp and free of rust, in their own scabbards
8. About three dozen thick, slow-burning tallow candles

Living Greyhawk™
Journal
Are You a Donor?
Blood Solemns of Hextor
New NPC Feature
Campaign News
no. eight. Readying 592 CY
RPGA NETWORK

Campaign News

What is Living Greyhawk?

LIVING GREYHAWK is the largest, most popular shared-world DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign in the history of gaming. Run under the auspices of the ROLE PLAYING GAMER ASSOCIATION Network (RPGA), the campaign offers gamers around the world the chance to contribute to the developing history of Oerth by taking part in scenarios played at conventions, game days, or in the comfort of home. For more information on how you can get involved in the campaign, visit **www.livinggreyhawk.com**.

New Adventure Tracking in the World of GREYHAWK

There's a new way to track the rewards and perils that affect your character in the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign! The campaign has now moved beyond the one cert for one magic item method that grew out of second edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS tournament play, and on to a more flexible way to track your wealth and experience point rewards: the adventure certificate.

For each adventure in which your character participates (and survives), you'll receive a certificate that grants you your fair split of the gold and experience points gained in that adventure. This certificate replaces the official campaign Log Sheet, so be sure to keep copies of all your adventure certificates with your character sheet. With your newly gotten plunder you can purchase items from the DUNGEON & DRAGONS Core Rulebooks to outfit your character for the next adventure.

After updating the bottom half of your adventure certificate, which tracks your character's wealth and item inventory, you go on to more dangerous adventures and greater rewards (again, if you survive). Your character level determines the maximum gold piece value of items you can buy from the Core Rulebooks. Think of it as a store that allows you to buy different wares based upon your level. At character creation, you can buy only items from Chapter 7 of the *Player's Handbook*. As your level increases, your buying options increase, too, allowing you to buy progressively more expensive items from the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.

Basically, between each adventure you can buy any item or combination of items from charts 8–3 to 8–30 that you can both afford and that costs less than your upper gold piece limit (as determined by the chart below). Some regions may ban certain items for sale in their region, which means you cannot buy those items directly after playing a regional scenario in that region or an adaptable scenario adapted to that region. The following chart gives the progression of your upper gold piece limits for character levels 1-7:

Character Level / Items
Character Creation: PH items only.
1st–2nd level: PH and DMG items, 500 gp or less.
3rd level: PH and DMG items, 1,500 gp or less.
4th level: PH and DMG items, 2,500 gp or less.
5th level: PH and DMG items, 4,500 gp or less.
6th level: PH and DMG items, 7,500 gp or less.
7th level: PH and DMG items, 9,500 gp or less.

The progression for up to level 20 can be found in the Rules Update 3 (RUP-3) document, which you can grab from the RPGA website (**www.wizards.com/rpga**). That Rules Update also has more in-depth rules and explanations about the adventure cert, and rules for updating your LIVING GREYHAWK character to the new system.

Remember, there is official *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* errata on the Wizards of the Coast website, and a few of the prices for magic items have changed. The most notable change to magic item prices involves the *boots of striding and springing*, which now cost a whopping 6,000 gp. So save up your gold, because you can't spring into that magic item action until your character reaches at least 6th level.

Existing magic item certificates are still valid. Still, some of you may want to sell them for half value, and gain some extra gold flexibility with the new system. You can do that, but wait to do it at the game table so that a Dungeon Master can moderate the transaction and note it on that adventure's adventure certificate. Keep in mind that items that can't be traded can't be sold either, and that upon cashing in an old magic item certificate, that certificated item must be voided (marked "void" in big bold letters along the length of the certificate) and kept as proof of the transaction; preferably attached to the adventure cert for the adventure in which the transaction took place.

GREYHAWK Years and Adventure Half-Life

How long do you have to play a particular LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure? Every LIVING GREYHAWK adventure is either assigned a GREYHAWK year or is slated as an "evergreen" adventure. All adventures released before January 2002 are considered 591 CY (the game year that started in August 2000 and ended December 31, 2001) adventures. Most adventures released in 2002 will be 592 CY adventures. An adventure may only be played during its year and the year after. So while this year you can play both 591 CY and 592 CY adventures, in 2003

the 591 CY adventures will retire, and you will be able to play only 592 CY and 593 CY adventures.

Evergreen adventures are adventures with longer lifespans. Those adventures are good until either the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign staff (in the case of Core or Adaptable evergreens) or the Regional Triad (in the case of regional adventures) decide to put them out to pasture.

Tristor Redux? All the Fun; None of the Hassle!

Did you miss out on the first run of *The Fright at Tristor*, the special LIVING GREYHAWK event that also served as the 2001 RPGA Member-Only Adventure? Afraid that your response would get lost in the mail or that you would be collecting Social Security by the time RPGA HQ got around to scoring your packet?

We feel your pain.

Happily, all the fun of *Tristor* is coming back in a new and hassle-free format. Starting May 2002, DMs Network-wide will be able to run *The Fright at Tristor* again. Just order the adventure as an event on the RPGA website, and we will send you a *Fright at Tristor* adventure cert, a table with experience point and treasure breakdown, as well as details on how to run the adventure for higher than 1st- and 2nd-level characters. DMs can process their own results for *Tristor* when they run the table. The new release of *The Fright at Tristor* costs 6 Time Units (TUs) to play, and is an adventure for characters level 1-6. The re-release of *Tristor* is a 592 CY adventure.

If you joined the RPGA late, and you need a copy of *The Fright at Tristor*, fear not. Details on how to buy the adventure will soon appear on the RPGA website. By hook or by crook, if you are willing to put down the cash, we will get you copy . . . while supplies last.

Tristor is Only the Beginning

Ever wish that you could play *The Sunless Citadel, The Forge of Fury* or *The Speaker in Dreams* with your LIVING GREYHAWK character? Soon, you'll be able to. By Gen Con 2001, these adventures will be sanctioned for LIVING GREYHAWK play in the same way *the Fright at Tristor* will be re-sanctioned. Eventually, more Wizards of the Coast published adventures will be sanctioned for LIVING GREYHAWK play, possibly including some sections of *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil.*

ON THE COVER

Illustrator Marc Sasso gives us a trio of blood golems of Hextor scouring Rift Canyon in search of elusive prey.

New Scenarios Now Available!

COR2-01 *As He Lay Dying*
by Erik Mona

An ambassador from the Duchy of Urnst needs adventurers to transport her cousin's cursed corpse from the city of Greyhawk to their ancestral home in Leukish. She's hired a barge, complete with its superstitious Rhennee crew, to carry the party from city to city. The dangers of river travel and the specter of an ancient curse will stand in the way of success. A Core adventure for characters level 3-8.

COR2-02 *Brendingund's Brood*
by Sean Flaherty and John Richardson

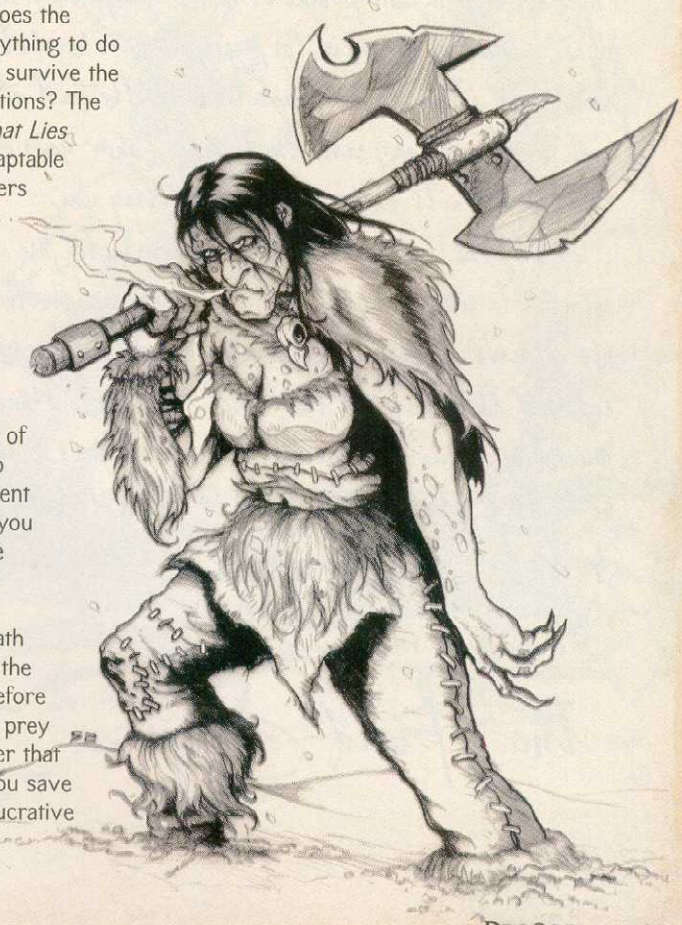
The church of Pelor needs your help in guiding a lost soul into the light—A lost soul with a familiar name: Brendingund. Part four of the *Brendingund Saga.* A Core adventure for characters level 1-6.

ADP2-01 *Descent into Darkness*
by Neil Ikerd

Undead are attacking farmsteads. The farmers speak of a mysterious "man of shadow's shroud." A crippled wizard seeks your help in recovering a family heirloom from the bottom of an abandoned freedom fighter's den. What evil lies within the old base? Does the shadowy man have anything to do with attacks? Can you survive the answers to these questions? The sequel to APD1-04 *What Lies Beneath,* this is an Adaptable adventure for characters level 3-12.

COR2-03 *Amidst the Mists and Coldest Frosts*
by Dale Friesen

You undertake an expedition in the lands of the Frost Barbarians to secure a trade agreement with the Fruztii. While you dream of coming home richer, the only thing the barren landscape promises is a quick death for the unprepared or the stupid. And that was before the locals began falling prey to the supernatural killer that raids from mist. Can you save the locals, secure the lucrative trade agreement, and make it home alive? A Core adventure for characters level 1-8.



Blood Golems of Hextor

Enchiridon the Fiend Sage

by Sean K Reynolds • illustrated by Sam Wood

My grim benefactor,

My congratulations to you on the discovery of the location of Chnasar's Pale Urn. Please let me know if it contains anyone who claims to know me. I warn you that it tends to reset its own magical wards over time, so any research should be undertaken with care.

Have you finished your examination of the links of Aspamalir? Hersol's animated head has proven reticent in revealing information on his lycanthropic spells, and I feel it would be helpful to have that item so that I may better coerce his cooperation. I take it that you enjoyed the magical cloak I made of his skin, for my spies have heard other nobles speaking of it after your appearance at the feast of Hextor last month. In any case, that should show your other advisors what fate awaits them should they betray you.

The Baklunish necromancer has contacted me again but refuses to give his name, and I have been unable to penetrate his defenses to learn it independently. He claims to have made copies of three pages of the Codex of Infinite Planes, which might be valuable in pinning down the item's position. All he wants in return for the pages is a copy of your eyes of bone spell. Do you wish to pursue the trade?

Your humble scholar,

the Fiend-Sage

Blood Golem of Hextor

Although the original blood golems created by the church of Hextor in Rauxes were lost along with everything else in that place, apparently one of the local temples has unearthed the secret or a process similar to it. They also have improved on the model, encasing it in arcane armor and giving it magic weapons as limbs. The drawbacks of the creature mean that it requires a constant supply of blood, making it a less than ideal guardian for our purposes, if only because we can put such blood to more productive uses. Still, they are intimidating in a grisly way, and they are incredibly useful against the weak-stomached.

Blood Golem of Hextor

Large Construct
Hit Dice: 10d10 (55 hp)
Initiative: -1 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft. (can't run)
AC: 26 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural, +9 *+1 full plate*)
Attacks: 2 *+1 heavy flails* +13 melee
Damage: *+1 heavy flail* 1d10+7
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Blood siphon, whirlwind of death
Special Qualities: Blood dependency, construct, damage reduction 10/+1, magic armor and weapons, magic immunity, rust vulnerability
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary or gang (2-5)
Challenge Rating: 8
Treasure: See below

Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 11-20 HD (Large), 21-30 HD (Huge)

The blood golems of Hextor are foul constructs made of the coagulated blood of sacrificial victims. Girded in magic armor and bearing magic weapons, they bring only death.

Without its armor, a blood golem looks like a vaguely humanoid shape made out of thickened red and black blood. It constantly leaks small amounts of blood, and it is often surrounded by swarms of flies and other flying vermin that dine on its leavings. Although the church of Hextor was once satisfied with this raw form, recently they have added a final step in which they seal the golem in a custom-made suit of *+1 full plate* with *+1 heavy flails* fused to each of its arms. This suit of armor includes two large spherical reservoirs on the shoulders that store blood to fuel the creature's power. Metal pipes and valves convey the creature's blood within the armor, but the seals are imperfect, and it still leaks fluid, albeit at a reduced rate.

Because it is a construct, the blood golem can remain in one place for hours or days, although it requires fresh blood on a regular basis, making it suitable as a guardian only if there are acolytes or other cultists available to attend to the golem's recurrent thrist.

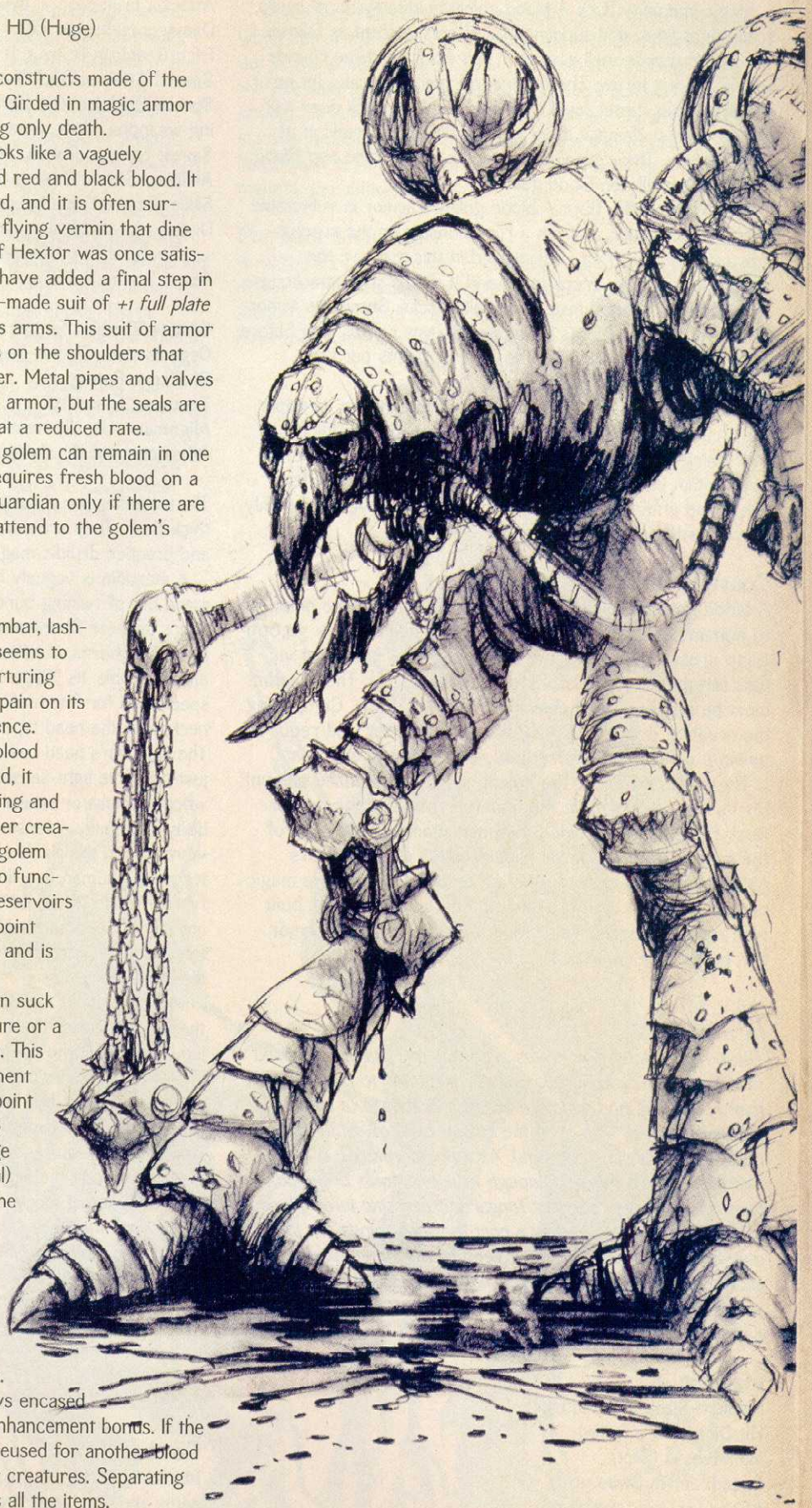
Combat

A blood golem is straightforward in combat, lashing out at its foes with its weapons. It seems to be a cruel and malicious combatant, torturing and inflicting the maximum amount of pain on its enemies despite its lack of true intelligence.

Blood Dependency (Ex): Because a blood golem constantly leaks its own vital fluid, it would eventually dwindle away to nothing and must frequently absorb blood from other creatures to continue functioning. A blood golem with full reservoirs has enough blood to function normally for 20 hours. Once the reservoirs are expended, the creature loses 1 hit point every hour until it reaches 0 hit points and is destroyed, leaving only its armor.

Blood Siphon (Ex): A blood golem can suck the blood out of a helpless living creature or a body that has died within the past hour. This blood drain causes one point of permanent Constitution drain. Every Constitution point of the creature so drained is enough to heal the golem of 5 hit points of damage or (once it is at its normal hit point total) power the blood golem for one hour. The siphon takes one full round for every Constitution point drained. The golem may store enough blood to power it for 20 hours. Once the golem's reservoir is full, it can still drain Constitution from its victims, but it gains no further benefits from doing so.

Magic Armor: A blood golem is always encased in a suit of full plate with at least a +1 enhancement bonus. If the golem is destroyed, the armor may be reused for another blood golem, but it does not resize to fit other creatures. Separating the *+1 heavy flails* from the armor ruins all the items.



Magic Immunity (Ex): A blood golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. The *gentle repose* spell acts as a *slow* spell for three rounds with no saving throw. The *regenerate* spell restores 1 hit point of damage per caster level. The *horrid wilting* spell does half or one-quarter damage if the golem fails or succeeds at its saving throw. The *repair damage* spells from *Tome and Blood* function normally on blood golems.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): A blood golem's armor is vulnerable to rust attacks such as from a rust monster or the *rusting grasp* spell. If its armor is destroyed in this manner, the golem's armor class drops to 17, and it makes slam attacks (+12 melee, 1d8+6 damage) instead of flail attacks. Should its armor be destroyed, the golem's blood supply lasts half as long before it starts taking damage, and it loses 2 hit points per hour instead of 1 point per hour.

Whirlwind of Death (Ex): A blood golem can spin its upper body, causing its flails to rotate at high speed, shredding everything they touch. This ability allows it to attack all creatures within its reach as if it had the Whirlwind Attack feat. The round after the golem performs this maneuver it can only take a partial action.

Construction

A blood golem's semisolid body is created from the blood of 16 humanoids sacrificed to Hextor. The golem costs 50,000 gp to create. Extracting the blood from the sacrificial victims requires a successful Heal check (DC 15). The creator must be 14th level and able to cast divine spells. Completing the creation drains 1,000 XP from the creator and requires *animate objects, bull's strength, gentle repose,* and *heal.*

The magic armor of the golem costs the standard amount for its kind, except that the materials cost for the masterwork full plate costs twice the normal amount because of the larger size and special requirements of the golem's physiology (total cost for the armor is 4,150 gp). The magic heavy flails cost 2,315 gp each. Blood golems can be built with more powerful armor, and a golem's existing armor can be further enhanced.

Marodin

These fleshy, intelligent plants are weak and inanely opposed to violence. They make poor slaves, succumb to pain rather than retaliating, and taste like boiled hellcabbage (a bland and textureless meal, with even the strong taste of sulfur failing to make up for its shortcomings). As water creatures, it is difficult to dry them out well enough to use them as firewood, but I am trying several sorts of fungal and parasitic infestations to see if they have any use as a host for such things. So far their only redeeming quality is their keen sense for vibrations, which allows them to locate invisible creatures. I hope to find some way to convert them to a subservient type of undead that we can use as guards.

Marodin

Medium-Size Plant (Aquatic)
Hit Dice: 2d8-2 (7 hp)
Initiative: +1 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft., Swim 30 ft.
AC: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks: Halfspear +1 melee
Damage: Halfspear 1d6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft., half damage from bludgeoning weapons, plant, water dependency
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 8
Skills: Animal Empathy +1, Concentration +3, Craft (any) +4, Diplomacy +4, Heal +5, Intuit Direction +3, Knowledge (nature) +4, Spellcraft +3, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +5
Feats: Scribe Scroll

Climate/Terrain: Temperate and warm aquatic
Organization: Cluster (2-5) or colony (6-24)
Challenge Rating: 1
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Usually neutral good
Advancement: By character class

The marodins are a race of intelligent, man-shaped plants with thick flesh. They are nonaggressive to the point of pacifism and practice druidic magic in their aquatic homes.

A marodin is vaguely human-shaped and appears to be made out of twining bundles of green plant fibers. Extraneous spurs of these fibers sometimes extend from the creature's joints like thorns, but these and its other body parts are soft and malleable. Its "fingers" are more of these thorny growths, specialized for fine manipulation. The creature has no true neck, with the head tapering out to merge with the shoulders. The marodin's head has several eye-like growths, but these are just primitive light-sensors useful in telling which way is up when in a lake or similar body of water. The creature's entire body is actually a sensory organ, capable of detecting fine vibrations in the air, land, or water and allowing it to "see" better than a human to a limited distance. A marodin has a deep furrow on its "face" or chest that it uses to intake the small amount of solid nutrients it needs, but the majority of its sustenance comes from sunlight or is absorbed directly through the skin.

Marodins have a peaceful society based on coexistence with the natural world. Their colonies are always underwater and led by a druid who counsels avoiding conflict with other races. The marodins have been known to help coastal communities or sailors in danger, but for the most part they remain underwater because they cannot function for long in the open air. If exposed to creatures that insist on hostility, marodins use their magic to thwart the aggressor without harming it, and rather than using lethal force, they flee. Marodins are so committed to pacifism that they relocate their communities rather than be drawn into violent conflict. Fortunately for the marodins, their command of nature magic is usually enough to drive off aquatic predators, and their underwater homes are hard to reach by landbound monsters.

The one known colony of marodin is in Lake Spendlowe in the Hold of the Sea Princes, although it is likely that they live undiscovered in other places.

Combat

Marodins prefer to use their spell-like abilities against opponents and only resort to using their spears against creatures

that can't be reasoned with (like constructs, undead, and vermin). When they fight, they take advantage of the natural terrain and ambush creatures that would overwhelm them in a fair fight.

Because they live underwater, they cannot forge metal objects, so their spears and other tools are made of wood, bone, and other natural materials (unless there is a druid in the colony capable of casting the *ironwood* spell).

Half Damage from Bludgeoning Weapons (Ex): A marodin's fleshy body suffers half damage from bludgeoning weapons.

Marodin Scrolls: Marodins have the ability to use the Scribe Scroll feat. Since normal scrolls are quickly ruined underwater, marodins instead carve sigils on small sticks. These "scrolls" hold one spell each and work exactly like parchment scrolls. Marodins can scribe their spell-like abilities as scrolls as well as any spells they can cast from spellcasting class levels. Normally half of a marodin's treasure is in the form of these scrolls.

Spell-like Abilities: 1/day—*calm animals, cure light wounds, entangle, guidance,* and *resistance.* The marodin casts these spells as a sorcerer with a level equal to its hit dice.

Water Dependency (Ex): A marodin's body dries and stiffens when out of the water for too long. Each hour a marodin is out of the water it takes 1 point of Dexterity damage. When the marodin reaches 0 Dexterity, its body has hardened enough to leave it paralyzed; a marodin in this state slowly starves to death over the course of several weeks. Immersion in water restores 1 point of Dexterity lost in this manner per minute.

Marodin Characters

A marodin's favored class is druid, and all marodin leaders are druids or multiclassed druids. Most marodins with character classes are either druids or experts because other classes have too much of a martial aspect for their tastes.

Playing Pieces

Living Greyhawk Journal Staff
illustrated by Todd Lockwood

Countless heroes and villains walk the Flanaess in search of fabulous treasure, political prestige, or a quick death. Here are some of their stories, along with complete statistics to help you drop two such characters into your campaign with little difficulty.

Eramheh Swiftwind

The streets of cosmopolitan Kalstrand, capital of the United Kingdom of Ahlissa, see all manner of steeds, wheeled vehicles, travelers, and merchants. Several times a year, they also feel the tread of Ashama, a rare Hepmonaland tiger companion of the druidess Eramheh Swiftwind. A patient half-elven woman of Flan heritage, Swiftwind serves Overking Xavener reluctantly, operating as the government's eyes and ears in the woodlands of Ahlissa in return for a service provided to her long ago by the would-be king. Cast out from druidic circles thanks to her friendship with the occasionally tyrannical and always self-interested monarch, Eramheh does her best to serve the wilderness and those who live off it. She operates as a solitary agent, exacting vengeance for the helpless when needed and always watching the woods for her calculating benefactor.

Eramheh Swiftwind

Female Half-Elf, 8th-level Druid

Strength	13	(+1)	Fort. Save	+6
Dexterity	12	(+1)	Ref. Save	+5
Constitution	10	(+0)	Will Save	+9
Intelligence	11	(+0)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	16	(+3)	Speed	30ft.
Charisma	14	(+2)	Size	M (5 ft. 3 in.)
Hit Points	42		Armor Class	15
Melee Attack	+7/+2		Flat-Footed AC	14
Ranged Attack	+7/+2		Touch AC	11

Most Common Attack
+2 scythe +9/+4, 2d4+3

Skills: Animal Empathy +13, Concentration +11, Heal +14, Handle Animal +13.

Feats: Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (scythe), Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: *+1 hide armor, +2 scythe,* scroll of *cure light wounds,* scroll of *endure elements (cold),* scroll of *flamestrike.*

Druid Spells (6/5/4/4/2 base DC = 13 + spell level): 0th—*cure minor wounds, detect magic (x2), detect poison, know direction, light;* 1st—*cure light wounds (x2), endure elements, entangle, obscuring mist;* 2nd—*barkskin, flaming sphere, speak with animals, tree shape;* 3rd—*cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang, snare, spike growth;* 4th—*flame strike, summon nature's ally IV.*

Special Abilities: Nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape, low-light vision, immunity to sleep, +2 racial bonus to saving throws against Enchantment spells or effects.

Background

Eramheh first came to Xavener's attention in 585 CY, when she implored the prince to help her discover the whereabouts of her brother, a mercenary of strong reputation who had last been seen the previous summer in Xavener's employ. She had been adventuring in the Scarlet Brotherhood-infested jungles of Hepmonaland, and she suspected unknown agents of the Scarlet Sign in Kalstrand of abducting and murdering her sibling.

True to his word, Xavener tracked down the agents who had murdered Eramheh's brother and had them publicly executed as a sign to the southern interlopers. In thanks for her role in exposing the cabal, Xavener offered Eramheh a pension and role as his personal agent in the forests. Her previous bonds to the local druidic circle forbade such political appointments, but she accepted due to loyalty and thanks for avenging her beloved brother.

Connections

Eramheh keeps mostly to the lands claimed by Ahlissa, but she frequently ventures as far afield as the southern Rieuwood, where she has befriended a powerful clan of satyrs. Players might encounter her when lost in woodlands or along a desolate country road. She knows much of the surrounding lands and is more than willing to reveal her knowledge to those who tell her tales of their own.

Powerful characters might even change her life with a little investigative work. Anyone looking into the public burning of the seven Scarlet Brotherhood agents in Kalstrand six years ago might also notice that the same number of men were released from the city's lunatic asylum earlier that same day.

A chat with a tavern owner might reveal that Eramheh's brother was a darker fellow than even his sister had imagined, but that the dirty work he did for the government weighed heavily upon him. The week before he disappeared, he was heard to say that he had important information on what Xavener was "really up to." It goes without saying, of course, that Eramheh might be interested in her sibling's final revelation.

Animal Companion

Ashama, Tiger: hp 48, see *Monster Manual* page 202.

Keldrin Thade

The elven nation of Celene takes its isolation seriously and maintains vigilant patrols along all of its borders, especially throughout the Welkwood and Suss Forests. Most of these patrols consist of a dozen or so low-level warriors and scouts, but the court also maintains a small network of more accomplished agents that act alone or in small groups. For almost 20 years, one such independent scout, a half-elf named Keldrin Thade, has patrolled the dangerous regions of the Suss Forest south of Courwood.

Keldrin Thade, CR 13

Male Half-Elf, 8th-level Ranger, 1st-level Wizard, 4th-level Arcane Archer

Strength	16	(+3)	Fort. Save	+14
Dexterity	18	(+4)	Ref. Save	+12
Constitution	14	(+2)	Will Save	+8
Intelligence	11	(+0)	Alignment	NG
Wisdom	12	(+1)	Speed	30 ft.
Charisma	8	(-1)	Size	M (5 ft. 11 in.)
Hit Points	93		Armor Class	21
Melee Attack	+15/+10/+5		Flat-Footed AC	17
Ranged Attack	+16/+11/+6		Touch AC	16

Most Common Attack

+1 mighty composite longbow (+3 STR) +20/+15/+10, 1d8+6

Skills: Hide +12, Intuit Direction +7, Listen +12, Move Silently +24, Search +7, Spellcraft +2, Spot +17, Wilderness Lore +9.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Far Shot, Scribe Scroll, Track.

Possessions: *+1 mighty composite longbow (+4 STR), cloak of resistance +2, gloves of dexterity +2, belt of giant strength +2, ring of protection +2, elven boots, eyes of the eagle,* elven chain, masterwork longsword, masterwork shortsword, 60 arrows.

Ranger Spells (2 base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*entangle, resist elements.*

Wizard Spells (3/1 base DC = 10 + spell level): 0th—*detect magic, light, read magic;* 1st—*spider climb.*

Wizard Spells Known: 0th—*all;* 1st—*shield, true strike, spider climb.*

Special Abilities: Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting when wearing light or no armor, favored enemy (goblinoids +2, giants +1), enchant arrow +2, imbue arrow, seeker arrow, summon familiar, low-light vision, immunity to sleep, +2 racial bonus to saving throws against Enchantment spells or effects.

Background

Keldrin had more chances than most half-elves to find acceptance in Celene, but his distant personality kept the elves he grew up with away. Keldrin served in Celene's military for several years, but his superiors quickly realized that his skill in the woodlands (coupled with some dabbling in arcane studies) made him ill-suited for duties other than scouting.

With his military superior's consent, Keldrin has spent decades scouting the perimeter of the elven kingdom.

Personality and Mannerisms

The burdens of being a half-elf in an elven kingdom as tradition-bound as Celene have left their marks on Keldrin's outlook. Keldrin is hardly friendly, but he does his best to look out for less-experienced wanderers, warning them away from powerful predators and helping out if the need arises.

Connections

Keldrin ranges over a large area and can appear almost anywhere along the Wild Coast, throughout any of the wild lands bordering Celene, or even deep in the Pomarj. When encountered, Keldrin is brusque, but he'll help those in need and knows a great deal about the areas around the elf kingdom.

Familiar & Animal Companion

In battle, Thyrrn, Keldrin's owl familiar, is trained to retrieve Keldrin's arrows if they miss their mark and are still intact.

Thyrnn, owl familiar; hp 46, see *Monster Manual* page 199 and the *Player's Handbook* page 51.

Arbaen and Araetha, wolves that Keldrin befriended using the *animal friendship* spell, share most of Keldrin's travels. Although they readily join in fights against goblins and the like, Keldrin is careful to keep them out of battles in which they would be overmatched.

Wolves (2): hp 15, 13; see *Monster Manual* page 204.

by Chris Pramas

Drazen's Horde

Your request for funding has been denied. The Blasted Desert is a natural barrier, so spending lavish amounts of gold on the series of border forts as you suggest would simply be wasteful. A strong cavalry patrol will be enough to deal with the few straggling orcs that make their way across the desert. The chances of a large force attacking the empire from this quarter are, in the estimation of this august body, nil.

–Excerpted from the Annals of the Oligarchs, Year 652.

A Costly Mistake

The Blasted Desert was the limit of Ravilla's expansion in the south. The Oligarchs were aware of habitable regions beyond the desert, but they were deemed unimportant. Even Trigorian, the elven warlord par excellence, scrapped an expedition across the Blasted Desert when it became clear that taking an army through such terrain would be a logistical nightmare. A few scouts did make the trek, and what they reported simply confirmed and strengthened the Oligarchs' stance.

The region below the Blasted Desert, known in Ravilla simply as "the Southlands," was found teeming with savage humanoids such as orcs, hobgoblins, and bugbears. While the sheer number of warlike brutes was of some concern, the scouts reported that internecine fighting was rampant in the region. Tribe fought tribe so often that the whole area was in a perpetual state of war. Only the goblinoids' legendary rate of reproduction kept the region from becoming depopulated by constant warfare.

The Oligarchs thus decided to turn their attention to other concerns, mainly the emerging nation of Thalos. The Southlands became an exotic destination for bands of adventurers, but little importance was attached to it. Even after the invasion of Ahmut and his nomadic baklien (see *Dragon* #286), there was no call to march south. The bakliens were no more native to the Southlands than the elves were, and the people of Ravilla hoped the fleeing horsemen would be finished off by the savage humanoids so mad for war.

The Rise of Drazen

Into the chaotic milieu of the Southlands was born a hobgoblin named Drazen. Like all of his kin, he learned the value of discipline and leadership. The hobgoblin tribes were smaller than those of the orcs and bugbears, but they made up for it in organization and battle tactics. Throughout his youth, Drazen learned the hard lessons of the battlefield and proved quite astute. He gained a reputation for personal bravery and proved himself a brutally effective commander.

Despite his accomplishments, Drazen would likely have remained an obscure goblinoid warlord if fate had not intervened. The ambitious Drazen called an unprecedented meeting, bringing over 30 hobgoblin warlords and tribal chiefs together. He planned to try to form a coalition of tribes to increase hobgoblin hegemony in the Southlands. The meeting was interrupted, however, by an incredible display of pyrotechnics in the northern sky. None of those present had ever seen such a thing before. Eyes widened as a fiery streamer arced

WAR APE

Medium-Size Animal
Hit Dice: 4d8+8 (26 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13
Attacks: 2 slams +7 melee
Damage: slams 1d8+4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: –
Special Qualities: Low-light vision, scent
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7
Skills: Climb +10, Jump +10, Listen +4

Climate/Terrain: Warm forest and mountains
Organization: Solitary or company (2-5)
CR: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always Neutral
Advancement: 4-6 HD (Large)

For uncounted generations, tribes of hobgoblin have used carnivorous apes in times of war. The hobgoblins, although noted for their discipline, have found the shock power of a war ape attack is not to be underestimated. Each tribe has one or more animal handlers who tend to the beasts in camp and ready them for battle.

Combat
War apes are not subtle. In most circumstances, they simply charge the nearest opponent and attack wildly.

across the desert, growing larger by the second. The hobgoblins scattered as the flaming missile descended from the sky and exploded in the midst of their camp. Several chiefs were incinerated in the blast and the rest thrown to the ground.

Drazen and the other leaders shakily got to their feet. They ringed a deep crater bellowing with acrid smoke. One quick-thinking adept blew the smoke away with a spell, revealing a battleaxe of unmatched craftsmanship. The weapon thrummed with power, and the same thought flashed into the mind of every warlord around the crater: *With this axe in my hand I would be unstoppable.* No one spoke, for there was nothing to be said. Weapons rang from scabbards and incantations filled the air. This was a fight to the death and all present knew it.

Several warlords leaped for the weapon right away, but spears and magic quickly cut them down. Drazen knew the adepts had to go first if he was to stand a chance. He rolled backward into the darkness and stalked around the crater until he spied a clutch of adepts flinging spells at raging warlords. Drazen came upon them without warning, attacking out of the darkness with terrible precision. The adepts fell one after the other, clearing the way to the crater. He then fought his way to the weapon and was the first to claim it. As his hand closed around the haft, he was filled with godly power. The remaining warlords fell beneath the axe, leaving Drazen master of the axe and all the hobgoblin tribes.

Across the Blasted Desert

With Stratis's axe to aid him, Drazen proceeded to do the impossible. Once he had consolidated his command of the hobgoblin tribes, Drazen led his army on a lightning campaign through the Southlands. Tribe after tribe fell before him. All were offered a choice: Join Drazen or die. Within two years he had conquered all of the Southlands, adding orcs, ogres, goblins, and bugbears to his growing army. He also made a key alliance with a circle of orc druids. These disparate troops became a frightening force, held together by hobgoblin discipline.

Even Drazen's hobgoblin officers wondered what their leader proposed to do with the army he had assembled. The answer was not long in coming. Drazen had seen the fires in the sky. He knew that more of these weapons were to be found in the north, and he meant to make them his own.

If any doubted the sanity of a desert crossing, they kept their mouths firmly shut. Drazen and his hobgoblin lieutenants organized everything down to the smallest detail. The orc druids were key to the crossing, since they could provide water to the troops and manipulate the weather. The march was arduous despite the preparations, and thousands died in the month-long trek. Drazen felt no pity. In his judgment he had merely stripped away the weakest elements of his army.

The army Drazen led into the Sundered Empire was mighty despite the losses. It sliced into the underbelly of the Free States and what was left of the elven defenses in 1008. Huge swathes of territory fell to the horde. No one was ready for such an attack, and the elves were already beset on several sides. Drazen's headlong advance was only checked by that of another victorious army, that of Thalos. The two forces met in the Free States, and Almira's army defeated Drazen's Horde in a hard-fought battle. This marked the limit of Drazen's expansion, at least temporarily. Drazen opted to pull back, consolidate his gains, and recruit new troops.

The horde was thwarted once, but as long as Drazen still lives, it is a threat to every nation of the Sundered Empire.

WIZARDS WORKSHOP

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Drazen's Horde storms across the desert.

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by Rob Heinsoo

Offbeat Beatdown

This column is dedicated to bringing you tips and tactics for the *Dungeons & Dragons Chainmail* game to help you play better and win. This month, however, we're going to look at fighting the good fight with a bad warband.

Some of the warbands that follow are goofy. Others are powerful. All veer from their faction's standard mixture of models and tactics. Playing one or two of them should give you an appreciation for how your models can work better under more sensible conditions. Or maybe you just want to prove that you can play well against the odds.

Ahmut's Legion: Stumbling Toward Ahmut

• Models	Cost
Troops	
(4) Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll	60
(1) Zombie Troglodyte	10

• **Terrain:** 4 Hissing Pools

• **The Low Down:** You're the *Wild Bunch* without Butch Cassidy or the Sundance Kid. You're the *Bad News Bears* without Walter Matthau. You're 70 points of utterly lethal brutalization, assuming you can convince your enemies to come within range of your troops.

• **The Cunning Plan:** Shuffle forward toward the center of the board. If your opponent didn't bring terrain that blocks line of sight or is foolish enough to give your zombies line of sight to her models, shuffle toward the enemy. When you catch and dismember one of your foes, chant, "I eat your brains." Repeat.

• **Why it Just Might Work:** Playing without commanders is normally a bad idea. But undead are fearless, so they never need commanders to rally them.

Of course the other thing commanders are good for is to maneuver, and that's where your warband has an Achilles heel growing from the center of its misshapen zombie forehead. A cunning opponent can maneuver to get line of sight with a ranged attack on just one of your models. If your model sits still, it's probably going to be shot to pieces. If your model charges after its tormentor, it dies around a corner out of line of sight, hacked to pieces by the lone model's friends.

Against a sloppy opponent, or someone who has no models with ranged attacks, you might get to do some of that "I eat your brains" chanting. Against most other opponents, count every damage counter you inflict as a victory.

• **The Rematch:** Trade in one of those Slaughterpit Zombie Gnolls, and buy your warband a Human Death Cleric commander. With 4 Command Points, she can maneuver every one of your zombies every turn, or give 2 of them a +2 to hit.

Drazen's Horde: Skinny Recruits this Month

• Models	Cost
Commanders	
(1) Hobgoblin Fighter	15
(2) Orc Druid	24
Troops	
(6) Human Marine	30

• **Terrain:** 4 Sacred Circles (because this warband needs all the to-hit bonuses it can dredge up)

• **Tactical Advantage:** +1

• **The Low Down:** How low are you willing to go? The Human Marine is the only member of the normally good factions whose neutral alignment allows him to be swayed to the cause of the stampeding hordes. If you're normally a Horde player, this warband offers the sick satisfaction of sending your enemies into battle to die for you.

• **The Cunning Plan:** Hang back. Use the Orc Druids to cast *entangle* and slow down enemies in spots where the Human Marines can shoot them. If your enemy has ranged weapons, put the high armor Hobgoblin Fighter in front, and heal him regularly with the Druids' spells. Hold most of the Marines back until they can slip into combat against enemies who are already engaged in melee—that way the Marines get the to-hit and damage bonuses from the Sneak Attack. If you're hoping to win, don't hang back too long with the Orc Druids and the Hobgoblin Fighter. If you do, your temporary human allies are likely to be eliminated before your leaders take damage. Use your leaders in melee early so that when they get damaged and have to make morale checks, they only need a 13+ save to avoid routing.

• **Why it Just Might Work:** You've got enough command points to maneuver or rally three of your cross-faction troops at a time. The Hobgoblin Fighter has enough command to give a single cross-faction model a +2 bonus to hit. Truthfully, you don't have much of a chance. But if you're the type who relishes fighting with one arm severed at the elbow, good luck.

• **The Rematch:** Stop hoping for tough humans and go back to what you know.

Ravilla: the Snakestrike Pod

• Models	Cost
Troops	
(4) Gray Elf Snakestrike Duelist	60
(1) Gray Elf Warsinger	9

- **Terrain:** Whatever you like
- **Tactical Advantage:** +1
- **The Low Down:** The Gray Elves would like to register a complaint. They don't belong in this article, they say, because they're actually a decent warband. Complaint noted. But they're not the woodsy bowstring twangers most players think of when they think elves, so here are they are, trapped among the misfits.
- **The Cunning Plan:** The pod works best when it sticks together. Put one Snakestrike Duelist in the lead with three others touching her base from the sides and behind. When an enemy model moves into contact with one model in the pod, the Duelist being attacked is likely to get an attack of opportunity thanks to its Reach ability. Better yet, because of this ability, if there are still at least three Duelists in the pod, all of them are likely to get the +2 buddy bonus for attacking an enemy model that is in melee contact with three or more of your allied models. Keep the Warsinger out of harm's way behind the Duelists, where it can use its Inspire Courage +2 ability along with its bow to plink away at enemies. Breaking up the pod is usually a bad idea, but if you play the Blood Harvest scenario, you'll be able use your troops' Independent ability to send them running to gather the sparks a few steps ahead of your foes.
- **Why it Just Might Work:** The Snakestrike Duelist's Melee Attack starts off at an extremely good +7.

WARSINGER ▲
SNAKESTRIKE ▶

HAMMERERS ▶
▼ PULVERIZER
◀ HUMAN CONSCRIPTS

Add the +2 bonus for the Warsinger's Inspire Courage ability and the +2 buddy bonus, and the Duelists can expect to fight most of the battle at a whopping +11 to hit. (Attacking through an allied model with the Reach ability gives you another -1 to hit, so some attacks are likely to be at +10.) Any enemy model that fails a morale save and breaks away from the whirring chains of the Snakestrike pod takes an attack of opportunity from each Duelist who is within 2 inches.

- **The Rematch:** The pod is what it is. Do not tinker with the pod.

Thalos: Whirrrrrrrr Click Click Shreeeeeeee!

• Models	Cost
Troops	
(2) Hammerers	44
(1) Pulverizer	21
(2) Human Conscripts	4

- **Terrain:** 4 Hissing Pools
- **Tactical Advantage:** +1
- **The Low Down:** Imagine this as the pilot episode for a twisted buddy-film sitcom. Two giant Hammerers and their Pulverizer companion trundle through the underground. A couple of hapless Human Conscript servants scramble alongside. The Pulverizer whines that it would rather be mining. The servants try to look inconspicuous and hope that the automatons forget to give them any orders.
- **The Cunning Plan:** Put the Conscripts in front where they'll absorb some of the early ranged attacks or charge damage, and then activate your automatons by rolling 11+ every time. If you manage this, your enemies shall surely fall before you like extras in a Hong Kong action film. But if you fail in these activation die rolls, woe to you. Happily, you might take some comfort in blaming the dice.
- **Why it Just Might Work:** When you play 50-point games and there's only one automaton on the board, enemies can dodge around the trouble spot where your automaton is (usually) sitting. With three automatons on the board, it's all trouble.

Unfortunately, you'll suffer from the same problem as the no-commander Ahmut zombie warband mentioned earlier. You can occupy the center of the board and force your opponent to act against you, but a warband with some ingenuity, terrain that blocks line of sight, and at least one ranged attack can shoot you one at a time and force you to split your models on a one-way chase.

- **The Rematch:** Take out one Hammerer, put in one Aasimar Cleric. Take out the Conscripts, put in one Gnome Infiltrator. Now try it again, and this time, roll 11+. D

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This month the Sage the considers the ins and outs of several skills and feats in the D&D game.

Can a character use a synergy bonus for a skill she doesn't have? For example, a character has 7 ranks in the Tumble skill, which provides a +2 synergy bonus to Balance checks. Would the character still get the bonus if she had no ranks in Balance?

Yes. When your skills give you a synergy bonus to another skill, you get that bonus any time you make a check using that skill, even if you're making a skill check untrained. Note, however, that having a synergy bonus does not make you skilled; only having at least 1 rank in a skill does that.

The description for the Intimidate skill says you can use it to get a bully to back down or to make a prisoner give you the information you want. It strikes me that while a high Charisma score would be beneficial in some situations, having a low Charisma score would be even more effective other times. Is there any leeway in determining whether a high or low score would be used?

Never turn an ability penalty into a bonus. A character with a low Charisma score is not effective at persuasion. A low Charisma character might be ugly enough to startle his own mother, but that doesn't mean the character can make his ugliness work to his advantage. Contrary to what many people seem to believe, scared people do not always do what you want them to do. In fact, scared people tend to act in very contrary and unpredictable ways. When a character with a high Charisma score uses the Intimidate skill, he has a knack for throwing just enough scare into someone to make him a little more pliable, but not so much as to cause panic or revulsion.

You can grant a bonus to an Intimidate check (or to any other check) based on the situation or use another ability score for the check, as "Sage Advice" suggested back in issue #280.

My monk character can jump so far as to surpass his speed. Combine this with the 20-foot run it requires to do a running jump and my monk must use two move actions just to run, jump, and land, because the distance jumped counts against his maximum movement for that turn. Do you have to jump the full distance that was rolled? For example, I only want to leap across a 10-foot chasm, but I roll so well that my monk jumps 25 feet. Does he have to sail the full 25 feet?

No. Your Jump check result says how far you can jump, not how far you must jump.

Many things influence how far a character can jump. Which of these variables stack and which don't? For those that stack, in what order do you apply the modifications? Consider a halfling with one level in barbarian (speed 30), a Jump skill modifier of +12, a *ring of jumping*, and *boots of speed*. Now suppose the character uses the run action. Just how far can this character jump? What would happen if the character has *boots of striding and springing* instead of *boots of speed*? What if the character was a monk instead of a barbarian?

Always figure out your character's base speed first, including magical increases. Then figure out the effect of your Jump check, and then any increases to that; figure in changes to your character's speed before applying multipliers to the distance jumped.

As a barbarian, the character in the example has a base speed of 30 (20 feet for halflings, +10 feet for being at least a 1st-level barbarian).

Assuming no magical effects, a running broad jump, and a roll of 20 on a Jump check, the character would clear an absolute maximum of 27 feet (5-foot minimum plus 1 foot for every point the Jump result exceeds 10—12+20=32; 32-10=22; 22+5=27). However, the maximum distance anyone can clear in a running broad jump is 6 times his height. For the average male halfling, that's about 18 1/2 feet (halfling males average 3 feet, 1 inch tall).

You'd figure out the distance for any other kind of jump the same way, although the minimum distance and the effect of the Jump check would vary with the kind of jump.

A *ring of jumping* adds +30 to Jump checks and eliminates the height limitation. *Boots of speed,* because they confer a *haste* effect, increase the distance jumped by 50%. So, in a running broad jump our sample character can clear 85 1/2 feet (12+20+30-10=52+5=57×1.5=85.5).

Boots of striding and springing double the wearer's base speed, giving the sample character a base speed of 60 feet. The distances given in the Jump skill description are based on a speed of 30 feet, and any increases or decreases in speed affect the distance jumped proportionately. In this case, jumping distances are doubled, and the

POWER PLAY

I Am the Expert by Stephen Schubert

Smart characters know that not getting hit is the key to staying alive. For example, a 5th-level human fighter with 18 Strength, Dodge, Expertise, and Weapon Focus, wearing full plate and a large shield has an AC of 26 or 27 while fighting (10 base, +1 Dexterity, +8 full plate, +2 shield, +5 Expertise, +1 Dodge against one opponent), not counting additional bonuses from equipment. He still has +5 to hit (+5 base, +4 Strength, +1 Weapon Focus, -5 Expertise), also not considering equipment. If he also has the Blind-Fight feat, then he doesn't lose his dodge bonuses when attacked by unseen opponents.

POWER PLAY

Walking a Thin Line
by Stephen Schubert

A 2nd-level halfling or elven rogue with a 20 Dexterity and 5 ranks each in Balance and Tumble has a +12 to Balance checks (+5 ranks, +5 Dexterity, +2 synergy bonus) and doesn't lose her Dexterity bonus while balancing. She only needs a roll of 3 to walk across a 2-inch-wide surface. With Skill Focus (Balance) the bonus rises to +14, making 2-inch-wide surfaces automatic, and the rogue can cross 7-12-inch-wide surfaces at full speed.

sample character can jump 114 feet in a running broad jump (12+20+30-10=52+5=57×2=114).

Running doesn't increase the distance you jump, because it does not increase your base speed, it simply allows you to move farther during your turn.

If the sample character was a monk instead of a barbarian, the distances jumped would be slightly less because the character's base speed would be lower. Note that the monk's fast movement ability becomes a supernatural ability starting at 9th level. Once that occurs, the monk's fast movement no longer stacks with *boots of striding and springing*. A 9th-level human monk, for example, has a speed of 60. If wearing *boots of striding and springing*, the monk's speed is 100 (twice the 50-foot speed the monk would have at 8th-level, which is the fastest nonsupernatural speed the monk can achieve).

The description of the Jump skill says that any distance you jump counts against your movement for the turn. What happens if my character manages to jump farther than her speed allows, or faster than the character can move in a turn? Suppose I have a speed of 40 and I activate a magic item (a standard action), then make the required 20-foot run for a running broad jump. I can only move another 20 feet this turn. What if my Jump check indicates a jump of 25 feet or more?

When you jump farther than you're allowed to move, you can just jump a shorter distance, as noted earlier, or you can just finish your turn in midair and finish your jump on the next turn. There's no rule that says your jumping distance is limited by your speed. There is a rule that says any jump counts against your move for the turn. (In this case, you're using your Jump check to determine how much distance you can cover in a single jump, and then spending as much movement as necessary to complete the jump.)

If you finish a turn in midair, your next action must be a move action to finish or continue the jump. Note that you make only one check for the jump.

Answer to Mind Blast: CONSTRUCT (CONSTRICT)

NEW FROM ASPECT

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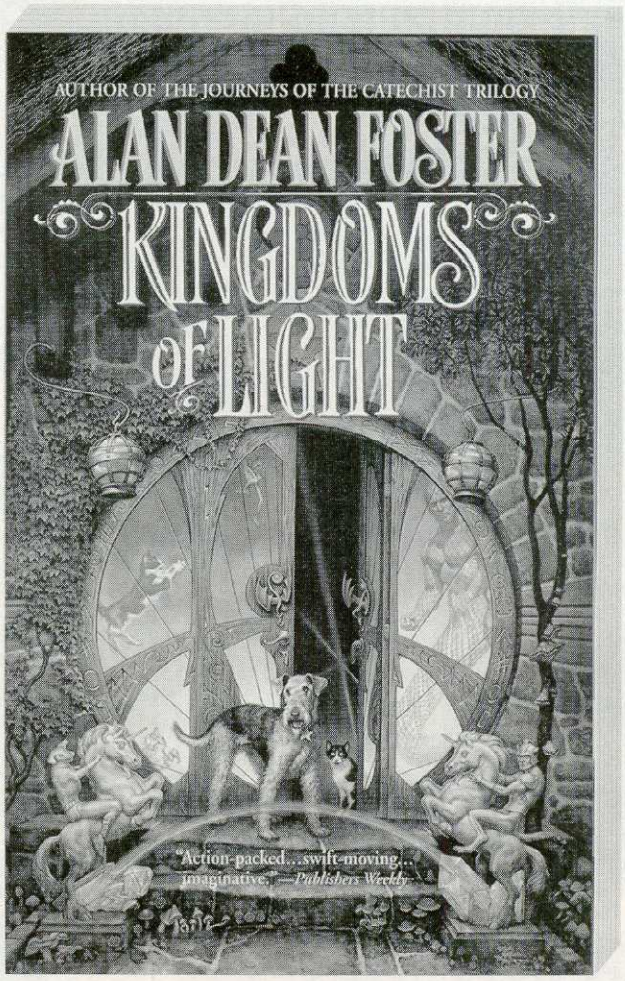
AUTHOR OF THE JOURNEYS OF THE CATECHIST TRILOGY
ALAN DEAN FOSTER
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After a battle against an evil clan of sorcerers plunges the world into darkness, the wizard Evyndd unleashes his last and greatest spell—transforming his household pets into humans. Charged with the task of returning light to the world, the motley crew struggles with their feral origins and discovers special gifts that may save mankind....

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The description for the Jump skill shows how much distance you can achieve in a broad or high jump, but what about the combination? How high can you go in a broad jump? How far can you go in a high jump?

Horizontal jumps are as high as 1/4 the distance jumped, which occurs at the midpoint of the jump. For high jumps, just assume the horizontal distance is equal to the minimum horizontal jump for the type of jump you're making (3 feet for standing jumps, 5 feet for running jumps).

If someone were to jump 30 feet into the air, does he take damage from falling? Or better, if someone can make a 200-foot broad jump, does he take falling damage? If so, how much?

The *Dungeon Master's Guide* says you suffer falling damage when you deliberately jump down from a height. However, you're not jumping down from a height unless the place where you land is lower than the place you start, no matter how high you actually jump when traveling between the two. In any case, if your jump check result is 15 or higher, then you take no damage from the first 10 feet you drop, and the damage from the second 10 feet is subdual damage (see page 112 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). If you make a high jump to get over a 30-foot barrier, and the floor is the same level on the other side, you suffer no falling damage. If, however, you discover that the floor is 30 feet lower on the other side, you fall the extra 30 feet. The damage would be 1d6 normal and 1d6 subdual (none for the 30 feet you jumped, none for the first 10 feet of the fall, 1d6 subdual from the second 10 feet of the fall, and 1d6 normal for the third 10 feet of the fall)—provided, of course, that your Jump check result was at least a 15.

The description for the Tumble skill says you can tumble up to 20 feet as part of normal movement to move through an area occupied by an enemy (DC 25), or through an area threatened by an enemy (DC 15). Does the 20 feet have to be continuous? If your enemies are staggered apart and you have enough movement to go through or past all of them, can you break the 20 feet up into 5-foot chunks to get past each enemy? Or is this not allowed because it counts as multiple uses of the Tumble skill? If it is allowed, do you have to make a separate roll for each enemy you try to pass? What if you tumble as part of a Spring Attack?

Tumbling is part of movement, not a separate action. You can tumble any number of times during a move action, so long as you do not tumble more than 20 feet or move farther than your speed. Each time you tumble, you make a separate Tumble check, using whatever DC is applicable at the time. If you tumble during a double move, you're allowed 20 feet of tumbling as part of each move action.

If you're using the Spring Attack feat, you're taking a move action and the attack action, so you're moving once and can tumble a maximum of 20 feet as part of that single move. You could, however, tumble both before and after the attack.

In the scrolls section of Chapter 8 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, it says a spellcaster trying to cast a spell from a scroll of a higher caster level than he is must make a caster level check. What is a caster level check? What modifiers do I add to the roll? For example, I presume that the spellcaster's own level is added as a modifier. What about the applicable ability bonus? What about the Spellcraft skill?

To make a caster level check, roll 1d20 and add your caster level—no other modifiers apply (see page 276 in the *Player's Handbook*). The Spellcraft skill can help decipher the writing on a scroll so you can identify the spell, but that doesn't help you activate the spell.

It's possible that your caster level could vary. For example, if you are a multiclass character, say a 5th-level wizard/6th-level cleric, your caster level for wizard spells is 5th. To use a scroll with a wizard spell on it, your caster level check will be 1d20+5. If you were using a scroll with a cleric spell on it, however, your caster level check would be 1d20+6.

THE UNSPEAKABLE OAF by John Kovalic

How do you determine the DC for the caster level check required for a scroll? For example, a 1st-level wizard tries to use a scroll of *magic missile* scribed at 5th level. The spell level of the scroll is 1st level, but the caster level is 5th. Does the 1st-level wizard have to make a caster level check to activate this scroll?

First, keep in mind that the level of the character who scribed the scroll does not solely determine the caster level. The character scribing a scroll can set any caster level, so long as it is no higher than the character's own caster level and no lower than the minimum level required to cast the spell. A 5th-level wizard scribing the 1st-level *magic missile* spell on a scroll could set the caster level anywhere from 1st level to 5th level (see page 178 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

To determine if a scroll user has to make a level check to activate a scroll spell, you compare the spell's caster level (not the spell's level) to the user's caster level (see page 203 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The scroll user must make the check if her caster level is lower than the scroll's. The DC is the scroll's caster level +1. Note that there are numerous other requirements for using a spell off a scroll; see pages 199-203 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the next question.

Suppose a 3rd-level bard decides to take the Scribe Scroll feat. During an adventure, the bard decides to cast a spell from one of the scrolls she scribed. Does the bard cast the spell from the scroll as a wizard or sorcerer normally would? Or does the bard have to use the Use Magic Device skill? If the bard doesn't need Use Magic Device, what good is this skill to a bard?

To use a scroll, the character has to fulfill three requirements (see page 203 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*):

1. The spell on the scroll must be of the correct type (arcane or divine) for the character's spellcasting class. Bards are arcane spellcasters and meet this requirement for any arcane scroll.

2. The user must have the spell on his or her class list. A spellcaster using a scroll she has scribed meets this requirement (because you can't scribe a scroll with a spell you don't know; see the Scribe Scroll feat description).

3. The user must have the requisite ability score. A spellcaster using a scroll she has scribed herself probably meets this requirement. You cannot "know" a spell that you cannot cast. The only time the character would not meet this requirement for a scroll she made herself is if she suffered some sort of ability drain or ability damage between the time the scroll was scribed and the time it was used.

Note that bards have several spells, such as *cure light wounds,* that are much more common as divine spells. A bard cannot use a divine scroll without recourse to the Use Magic Device skill, even if the spell on the scroll is on the bard spell list.

As noted in the previous question, there might be a caster level check required to activate the scroll. In most cases, this is not necessary for a scroll the character has scribed herself unless the caster has suffered some kind of level loss between scribing the scroll and using it.

A bard with the Use Magic Device skill can use it to accomplish tasks like deciphering and activating divine scrolls or activating other items that have activation requirements the bard does not meet. See page 175 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for item activation requirements.

Can a character of any class properly use a *wand of bull's strength* if he has the necessary activation words? How does the Use Magic Device skill affect your ability to use this wand?

A wand is a spell trigger item. To use such an item, you must have the spell it contains on your class spell list; see page 175 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

If you have the Use Magic Device skill, you can attempt to use a wand as though you had the spell it contains on your class spell list (even if you're not a spellcaster at all). The Use Magic Device DC for activating a wand is 20 (emulate spell ability). You need to repeat this check each time you activate the wand (see the Use Magic Device skill description).

Does the arcane trickster prestige class's (from *Tome & Blood*) ranged legerdemain power make you use the same skill each time you use this power, or can you choose to use it for a different skill check each time? If you have masterwork thieves' tools, can you use them for ranged Open Lock or Disable Device checks?

You don't pick one skill to use with ranged legerdemain for your entire career. Each time you use ranged legerdemain, you choose a skill from the list (Disable Device, Open Lock, or Pick Pocket). Ranged legerdemain uses no tools, so you get no bonuses from masterwork tools.

The *Player's Handbook* says barbarians are the only characters that do not automatically know how to read and write. A barbarian must spend 2 skill points to gain the ability to read and write any language he is able to speak. The rules for multiclass characters say the character gets all class features of all classes, but must also suffer the consequences of all special restrictions of all classes, except that a character who acquires the barbarian class does not become illiterate. Does this mean that a barbarian who picks up a second class automatically becomes literate? If not, is literacy a class skill or a cross-class skill? If so, what happens if the barbarian has spent the 2 skill points on literacy? In any case, how many languages can a literate barbarian read and write?

A literate barbarian can read and write any languages he can speak, just as any other literate character can. If a barbarian becomes literate and later learns to speak more languages, the barbarian can read and write those languages. This also is true for any literate character.

If a barbarian adds a non-barbarian class level, the barbarian becomes literate. If the barbarian already has spent the 2 skill points, there is no extra benefit, and the barbarian does not get those 2 skill points back.

When you purchase barding for a mount, is it proficient in the armor, or does the mount suffer the armor check penalty?

Anyone wearing armor suffers the appropriate armor check penalty. Trained war mounts are proficient in light, medium, and heavy armor, untrained mounts are not proficient in any kind of armor, and they suffer additional penalties for untrained armor use as noted on page 80 of the *Player's Handbook.* D

by Rick Moscatello

KOHAN IMMORTAL SOVEREIGNS

Kohan Immortal Sovereigns is a rarity: a fantasy-based real time strategy game. In it, semi-immortal heroes fight for the forces of good and evil on a battlefield packed with fantasy favorites, from dragons to knights to demons.

One of the more interesting forces of evil in *Kohan* is the so-called shadow demon, which can reliably summon a pair of quasits to do its bidding as well as surround itself with a fog capable of confounding some missile attacks. Wise warriors would do well to destroy the shadow demon before taking on its minions.

SHADOW DEMON

Large Outsider
Hit Dice: 9d8+9 (49 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)
AC: 20 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 18
Attacks: Bite +11 melee, 2 claws + 6 melee
Damage: Bite 4d4+3, claw 1d6+1
Face/Reach: 5ft. by 5ft./10 ft
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, *summon quasits*
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/silver, SR 10
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +8
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14
Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +14, Hide +10, Listen +16, Move Silently +14, Search +14, Spellcraft +14, Spot +14
Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack.

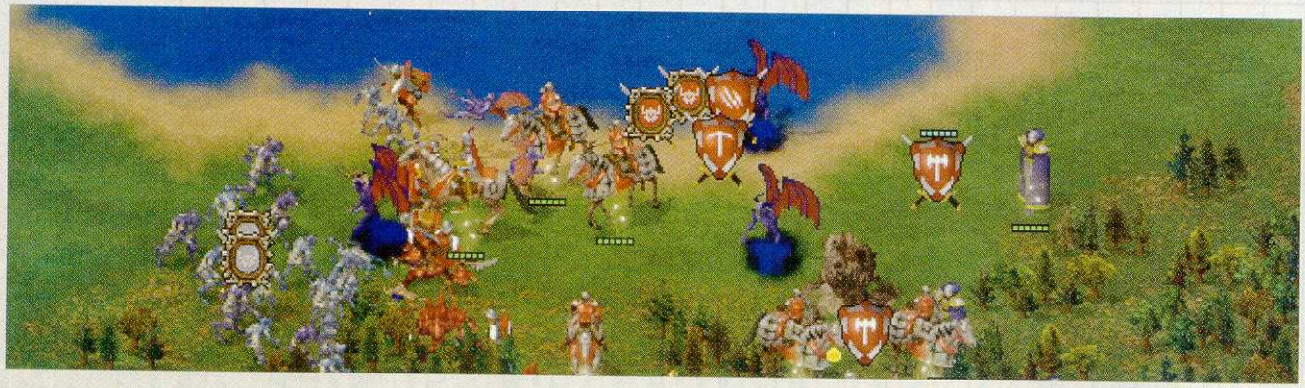
Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary or pack (2-4)
Challenge Rating: 11
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 10-13 HD (Large); 14-27 HD (Huge)

COMBAT

Shadow demons are reluctant to enter melee combat without good reason and generally wait until their minions are destroyed before engaging. Once in combat they are intelligent and spiteful, carefully destroying one enemy before moving on to the next.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*darkness, obscuring mist, scare,* and *telekinesis.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 5th-level sorcerer (DC 12 + spell level).

Summon Quasits (Sp): Once per hour a shadow demon can summon 2 quasits. The quasits do its bidding for one minute (10 rounds) before returning whence they came.



by Rick Moscatello

EVIL ISLANDS

Grey Leaf:
When violets blossom on the hillside the winter is over. Glory to you, alien! You avenged the kidnapping and washed away the stain of the offense against us. Now the Green Clan is in your debt. You will be rewarded and of course I will answer any questions of yours, if I can.
Item gained: Keystone "Celestial lightning"
Item given: Quest item "Spy's badge"

Evil Islands is an RPG with all the action of *Diablo* and all the story and puzzles of an adventure game. As is standard for story-dependent games, your character creation options are limited: You play Zak, the Chosen One, a preordained hero that the people have been expecting.

Evil Islands is a difficult game, and poor Zak seems to get killed every few minutes. Luckily, his resurrection is just a loaded game away. While such a power would make players godlike, there are a few ways to model this amazing ability, and characters in *Evil Islands* have a few other feats worthy of an adventurer's attention.

NEW FEATS

Avoid Critical Hit [General]

You sometimes avoid the most damaging blows.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Dodge, Skill Focus (Tumble), base attack bonus +8 or higher, Tumble skill.

Benefit: You can attempt to cancel any critical hit made against you. Note the modified attack roll that confirmed that a critical hit has been scored against you, and make a Tumble skill check. If your Tumble skill check result equals or exceeds the confirming roll (with modifications) then the critical hit is instead treated as a normal hit.

Improved Encumbrance [General]

You can carry more than your Strength would normally allow.

Prerequisite: Con 13+.

Benefit: Your encumbrance and carrying capacity is determined (from the chart on page 142 of the *Player's Handbook*) as though your Strength was 4 points higher than it is. For example, if your strength is 7, this feat would allow you to carry up to 38 lb. as a light load (as though your Strength were 11).

Predict Outcome [General]

Sometimes you can learn the outcome of a situation before it happens.

Prerequisite: Cha 13+, Wis 13+.

Benefit: Once per day, you can cast *augury* as a sorcerer of a level equal to your character level. This is a spell-like ability.

Predict Path [General]

You gain an intuitive feel for how a creature will behave.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+.

Benefit: Once per day, you can pick a creature you can see and for the remainder of the day, you gain a +2 insight bonus to all Sense Motive checks to gain information about that creature, all Wilderness Lore or Search checks to track that creature, and all Spot checks to see the creature when it is hiding. D

by Johnn Four

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Campaign Newsletters

A campaign newsletter is a fantastic way to get more DM duties accomplished in less time and to help your group get more enjoyment from your adventures. It gives you an opportunity to be creative, provide and ask for player feedback, and keep on top of the things happening in your game world. Any tool that makes your job easier and more fun for everyone is worth trying.

How To Begin: 10 Steps

1. With pen and notepad in hand, read this article a couple of times, and note any content, format, delivery, or ideas that appeal to you.
2. Make a list of topics that you think would benefit your game world, stories, and players and that would also be fun researching and writing about.
3. Ask your players what kind of information they would like to see in a campaign newsletter. Use your topics list as suggestions for them to think about.
4. For issue #1, pick two to five topics based on your group's preferences, decide on a delivery method, and then decide on the format.
5. Write your first newsletter! Set a time budget for each topic you've decided to write about (15 to 30 minutes for each is good for your first time), and tackle one topic at a time.
6. Format your content, design a layout, and do a spell check.
7. Deliver your newsletter.
8. Follow up with your players, and find out what they liked and didn't like.
9. Assess your players' feedback. Also think about what you personally liked and disliked about creating the newsletter and how you benefitted from it.
10. Make improvements and changes as necessary. Try different ideas and always experiment. Publish your next issue.

Newsletter Objectives

It's valuable to first consider what you want to get out of writing and maintaining a campaign newsletter. It's going to be something that you do on a regular basis, and time spent on the newsletter could mean time not spent on other planning activities. So, it's wise to be clear from the start what you want a newsletter to accomplish for you, your players, and your campaign.

Measure every idea, topic, and option that you consider against your chosen objectives list. Give ideas that fulfill multiple goals the highest priority, and keep any additional ideas for back-up or variety in the future.

10 Objectives Checklist

- ☐ Help with session planning
- ☐ Character development
- ☐ World development
- ☐ Campaign development
- ☐ Session and player organization
- ☐ Writing skills improvement
- ☐ Track campaign details
- ☐ Keep the story and campaign moving between sessions
- ☐ Entertain the group
- ☐ Create an archivable record of your campaign

Topics & Content Ideas

The number of things you could include in your newsletter can be overwhelming, so how do you choose from the thousands of different possible world, story, and game information topics?

Your best bet is to create a list of ideas that appeal to you the most, and then find out what your players' preferences are. Next, answer these three important questions to create a final, shortened list:

- What topics will help you get the most accomplished in the least amount of time? For example, a "Rumors & News" topic would help you plan upcoming stories, provide plot hooks for the PCs, develop your world, and manage your campaign's focus all at the same time.
- What topics would be the most valuable and interesting to your players and their PCs? For example, you might feel that a detailed history of a far-away kingdom would sow future campaign seeds and be fun to write, but would your players bother to read it? If not, consider holding off on that topic until the characters would find such information valuable.
- What topics would accomplish the objectives that you decided upon for your newsletter?

Once you have your "short list" of topics, sort them according to which ones you think are the most important or most fun. Then pick the top one and start writing.

Delivery Options

How you choose to deliver your newsletter greatly affects its layout and formatting as well as the overall time requirements to build it. Also, if you choose to use the Internet in some form, ensure that all of your players have fairly easy access so no one is excluded. Consider the following delivery options and their pros and cons carefully before making a final decision.

10 Topic Ideas For Your Campaign Newsletter

1. Campaign rumors & news
2. Famous or important NPCs
3. Geographical information
4. Monster information
5. Magic item information
6. Session organization and reminders: when, where, food
7. Player organization: handy contact information, PC names and information
8. On-going session events log
9. Player or character surveys and feedback
10. Rules updates, addendums, and clarifications

Email

Pros: Quick and easy to create and send, fast delivery.

Cons: Requires regular player access to a computer and the Internet.

Website

Pros: Full color and graphics support, creative layout options, 24/7 player access, archiving.

Cons: Can be time intensive, requires player Internet and computer access, webmastering knowledge a plus.

Private Online Discussion Group, Club, Or Community

Pros: Automated features such as mail-outs and archiving, 24/7 player access, replies and discussions.

Cons: Players need Internet access, requires knowledge of site's tools and procedures.

Snail Mail

Pros: Allows fancy layouts and special paper, nothing beats getting cool stuff in the mail, handwritten and typewritten options.

Cons: Cost of paper, printing, and mailing; can be time intensive; slow delivery.

Handed Out At Session

Pros: Same pros as snail mail, also: give out at beginning to keep idle players entertained, hand out at end to keep players interested between sessions.

Cons: Much the same as snail mail, also: absentee players can mean missed issues, can be distracting during sessions.

Feel free to experiment with different delivery methods based on on-going experience and player feedback. For example, you might find that email newsletters often remain unread while issues printed on fancy paper get read over and over again.

Writing Style

A great way to make your newsletters fun to read and write is to adopt a special writing style or point of view. For example, if you're playing in a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, consider writing as if the newsletter is from the scrolls of Elminster and Volo.

Just like *DRAGON Magazine* has monthly columns, consider making a couple of topics standard in every issue, and then mix-up the other topics and their writing styles. Also, try writing on the same topic from different perspectives, then find out what your players like and dislike to let your newsletter and writing skills improve and grow over time.

Campaign newsletters can be a lot of fun and a great help for your stories and gaming sessions. The key is to create something that you'll be able to maintain and publish regularly, and that the players enjoy reading. D

10 Writing Style Options

1. From an archivist, sage, or bard NPC perspective
2. From a PC perspective, based on character knowledge and skill checks
3. From a player perspective: ask players to contribute
4. From a DM-to-player point of view
5. From a game world point of view: "The Greyhawk Crier" that gets teleported to the major cities of Oerth
6. From a deity's viewpoint
7. From a villain's perspective
8. From an objective, alien point of view
9. From an intelligent monster's perspective
10. As a historical account, 1,000 years in the future

Top 10 Newsletter Tips

1. Keep it short. The value of your newsletter depends on its frequency and consistency. A short, snappy newsletter between every session would be preferable to a long version published every six sessions or irregularly.

2. Plain and simple is OK. Computer technology gives you many exciting options. However, if you're pressed for time each week, or don't want to muck around with web sites or desktop publishing, know that plain and simple works fine.

3. Write for your players and their PCs—keep them interested. Remember who your audience is and why they would want to read your newsletter.

4. Ask for player submissions. Ease the newsletter burden by using player submissions. Ask for specific types of submissions and consider some form of reward, such as an XP bonus.

5. Create a re-usable template. Feel free to work hard on your design, but make it easily reusable to save you time in the long run.

6. Create a boilerplate (header and footer). Format recyclable information, such as player contact data, issue number, NPC log, date, and so on into sections that can easily be re-used.

7. Use lots of headlines, sub-headlines, and bullets. Not only does this make your newsletter easier to read, digest, and remember, but it also makes it more valuable as an archive that can be searched through quickly.

8. Give it a cool name. Choose a name that reflects your DMing style, campaign flavor, or players' tastes.

9. Borrow information (for personal use only). Use the Internet, magazines, newspapers, and whatever else you can find to fill your newsletter with information and save you time.

10. Use your notes for content. You know all those background notes that you write but the players never get to see? When they become relevant to a story, use them as newsletter content.

by Ray Winninger

SEND DUNGEON MASTERING EMAIL TO:
scalemail@wizards.com
"Dungeoncraft" subject line.

SEND DUNGEON MASTERING SNAILMAIL TO:
"Dungeoncraft" c/o Dragon Magazine
1801 Lind Ave. S.W. • Renton, WA 98055

Raiders of the Lost World, Part III

"Dungeoncraft" is an on-going column that explores the fine art of Dungeon Mastering and offers an interesting behind-the-scenes look at the development of an actual D&D campaign. If you've missed any of the previous installments of "Dungeoncraft," you can find them online at: http://www.wizards.com/dragon

In the last installment of "Dungeoncraft," we looked at a few of the NPCs who inhabit Janda's Valley, the home base for the Lost World campaign. In this issue, we introduce some more and revisit the first rule of "Dungeoncraft."

The First Rule

This month's first NPC serves as a great example of the first rule of "Dungeoncraft." For those unfamiliar with earlier installments of the column, the rule is simple: Never force yourself to create more than you must.

In this case, the NPC described is so much more powerful than beginning characters that the time spent detailing his complicated stat block is better spent on other aspects of world development. The NPC, the ghost of a 17th-level wizard, has access to such a large number of spells and abilities that he can appear and disappear from the party's sight at will. Because of his immense personal power, the NPC serves only as a plot device, never as direct opposition to low-level PCs. After months (or more) of game time, the characters are likely to gain the ability to interact with the NPC on a more even footing, making a fleshed-out stat block necessary, but for now, it's enough to know that the NPC (a ghost) simply turns incorporeal and flies away whenever the characters try to mount a physical attack.

Orlok, Ghost, Wiz17: CR 19; hp 110; see *Monster Manual* page 212.

Because of his long-term use as both a mystery and eventual foe, Orlok serves two of the roles discussed in the last installment, "enemy" and "enigma."

Roleplaying Hook

Several decades ago, a small cabal of evil sorcerers uncovered some of the great magical secrets known to the wizard kings of the ancient lizardfolk empires that once dominated the Lost World. The sorcerers used these secrets to work in concert and cast a powerful spell that would enable them to scry back in time to the very beginning of the universe. By observing and grasping the very moment of creation, the sorcerers hoped to learn the ultimate truth of magic, making them all but invincible.

Instead of the great secret they were hoping to discover, the sorcerers found only a terrible void at the beginning of time. Somehow, this void penetrated their scrying pool in the form of an unstoppable rotting plague that infected the sorcerers and their acolytes. Within a matter of months, the plague horribly disfigured and debilitated its victims. Within a few years, the weakest of the victims started to die.

It took a couple of years, but the sorcerers eventually devised a plan to rid themselves of the plague. They discovered that one of the great wizard kings of an ancient lizardfolk empire was still alive and trapped deep in the heart of the subterranean ruins that were once his imperial capital. This wizard king, Uz, had been imprisoned by a powerful enemy many centuries ago. There was no written account of Uz ever escaping or of anyone finding or recovering his body. The cabal became determined to find Uz after one of the wizards devised a spell that would allow them to absorb the magical energies still stored in the wizard king's powerful mind. The elders of the cabal believed that these energies would be powerful enough to burn the plague away.

Later, once the preparations for the spell were nearly complete, the cabal dispatched an expedition to enter the ancient ruins, drain the imprisoned king's magical knowledge, and carry out their plan. Although the expedition located Uz, they never got an opportunity to work the fateful spell. Just before the spell was cast, the cabal was betrayed by Aukon, one of its own elders. Shortly after the cabal found Uz, the wizard king mentally contacted Aukon in his dreams. In exchange for casting *freedom* rather than the coven's draining spell, Uz offered to not only cure Aukon of the strange plague, but also to share some of his great magical knowledge. After Aukon performed the service and Uz awoke, the wizard king fulfilled his promises and then traveled deep into the jungle to begin pursuing mysterious ends of his own.

With Uz gone, the cabal no longer had any means of curing the plague, and it

didn't take the other elders long to discover that it was Aukon's treachery that robbed them of their salvation. Aukon soon learned that he had grossly underestimated the resilience of his former comrades. The remaining elders used the last of their energies to chase him across half a continent in the hope of extracting vengeance before their deaths. After a pursuit that lasted almost six months, the cabal finally caught up with Aukon at a small inn not far from Janda's Valley.

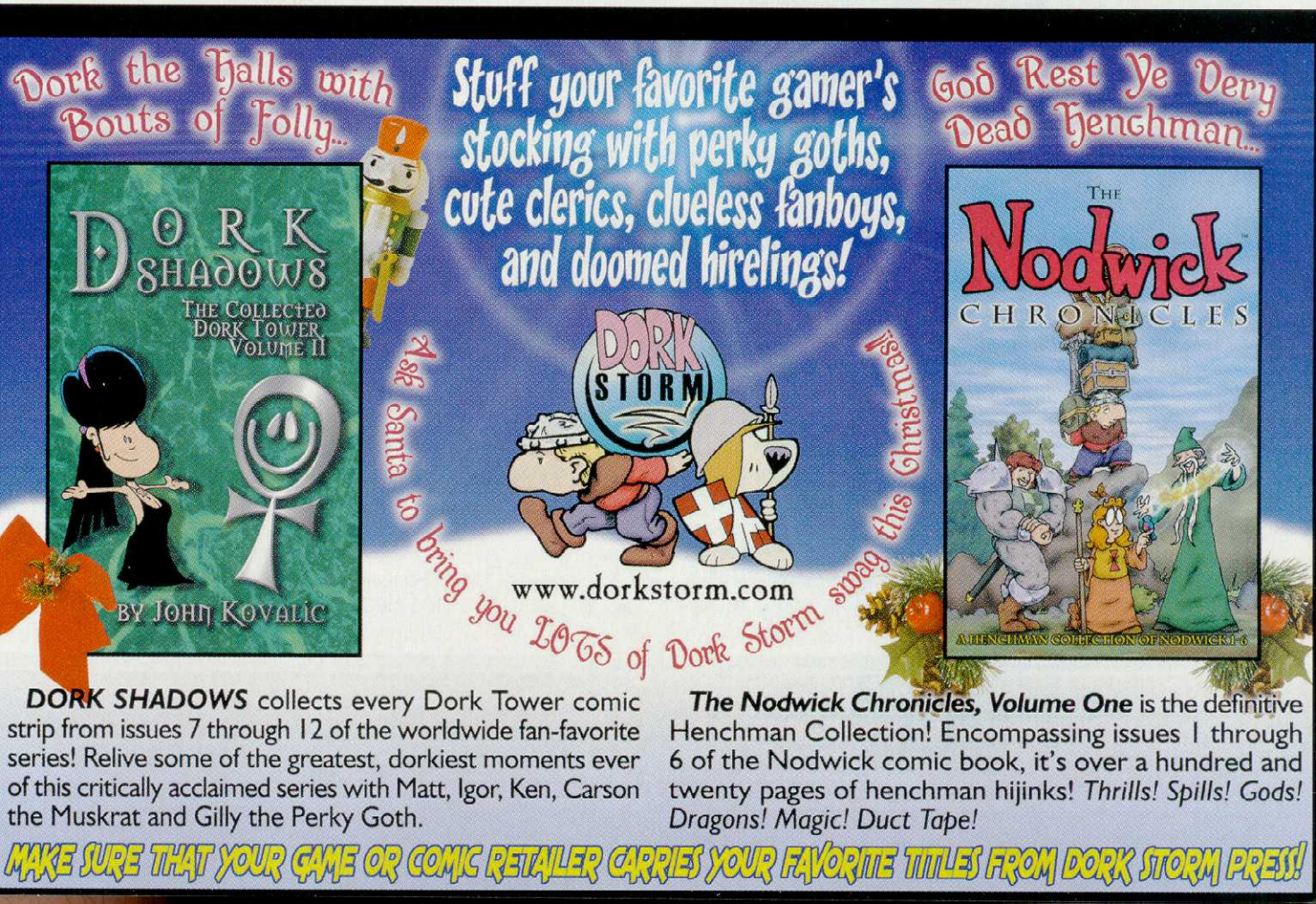
Instead of emerging from the inn to fight what was sure to be a final, cataclysmic battle against the dying sorcerers, Aukon instead called upon the magical secrets Uz taught him. Although he didn't have enough time to fully explore the wizard king's knowledge, he was able to devise an escape. A young pregnant woman happened to be staying nearby in the same inn. Using the wizard king's secret magic, Aukon managed to place his own soul within the unborn child inside her. When the coven finally found Aukon, it appeared to them as though he had taken his own life, although his soul was soon to be reborn.

Over the next few years, the remaining members of the cabal slowly perished, but not before one of the elders, Orlok, uncovered the truth about Aukon's final fate. Just before he died, Orlok used powerful magic of his own to insure that his ghost would remain in the Lost World to find Aukon and take vengeance upon him. Just a short time before the campaign began, Orlok finally found his reincarnated nemesis and discovered that the unfortunate has no memory of his past life; Aukon's soul has yet to manifest its influence. Aukon's magic is such that destroying the unknowing host won't destroy Aukon's soul, so Orlok appears to the host sporadically, laying vague hints and traps, attempting to awaken Aukon's soul. Orlok plays a dangerous game—he must find a way to destroy the soul (the health of the host is immaterial to Orlok), but he can't risk a direct confrontation with Aukon once he's fully returned to his power. Orlok's goal is to ultimately drive the host mad with the knowledge that he carries the soul of a cruel sorcerer from another age. If he can accomplish this goal, Orlok is certain that the host will destroy himself or simply waste away in despair.

As a ghost, Orlok always manifests as he appeared before he contracted the void plague—a tall, handsome man with long, flowing hair. To Aukon's host, he appears to be a mysterious drifter with a strange sense of foreboding that accompanies him. To take full dramatic advantage of his manifestations, Orlok only appears when the host is alone or when others present are somehow distracted. The ghost never simply appears or vanishes before the host's eyes, preferring instead to come and go in a more subtle fashion.

The reappearing ghost is a mystery designed to give the players a puzzle they can slowly unravel across the course of several months of play. He also stands as an interesting example of using a monster as a key NPC.

To maximize this NPC's impact, one of the player characters will serve as Aukon's host, preferably one who is good aligned. Inventing secret details about a PC's past can be risky, since you might accidentally alter the PC into something its creator isn't interested in playing. The fact that the PC is carrying Aukon's soul around inside of him shouldn't stop the player from inventing the exact character he desires in all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other respects. In the meantime, there should be some real drama out of the tension between the host PC who sees the ghost and the other PCs who don't. The host character's player should get lots of mileage out of his "good" character coming to grips with all the evil things he did in his past life. Eventually, the adventurers will find a way to separate Aukon's soul from its host, removing the burden from the host character.

Orlok's backstory provides many threads that can be used as springboards to future adventures. For example, Aukon's soul might manifest itself and temporarily take over the host, forcing the rest of the PCs to come to the rescue. Alternatively, the strange plague from the void might reappear, forcing the players to deal with its deadly effects. At the very least, Uz, the ancient wizard-king, is still out in the jungle making fiendish plans of his own.

Masuud

Male Human, 11th-level expert

Strength:	10	Fort Save:	+4
Dexterity:	10	Ref Save:	+3
Constitution:	9	Will Save:	+13
Intelligence:	18	Alignment:	NG
Wisdom:	18	Speed:	30ft.
Charisma:	13	Armor Class:	10
Hit Points:	30	Flat-footed AC:	10
Melee Attack:	+8/+3	Touch AC:	10

Special: Proficient with simple weapons and light armor.
Skills: Appraise +18, Bluff +17, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +15, Gather Information +15, Innuendo +11, Knowledge (local) +18, Listen +18, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18.
Feats: Skill Focus (Bluff), Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Dodge, Mobility.
Languages: Common.
Possessions: Dagger.

Roleplaying Hook
Masuud is a gruff, cantankerous old man. He loves to hurl witty insults at both his friends and his foes, and he takes much delight in the fact that his age and general frailty make it unlikely that the latter would ever strike back at him in reprisal.

Masuud is a frail old beggar. He dresses only in rags and makes no attempt to tame his tangled mop of white hair or his long, voluminous beard. He spends all day and night begging in the bazaar in Janda's Valley and mocking just about everyone he comes across. What makes him unique is that he is actually one of the wisest folk on the whole of the Lost World. There is virtually no riddle he cannot solve and no dilemma he cannot unravel. He is such an expert at judging human emotion and character that once he meets someone he is often able to predict how that person will think or behave with amazing accuracy.

Although Masuud likes to keep the true extent of his mental faculties a secret, his arrogance sometimes gets the better of him and causes him to show off for a crowd. He'll certainly protest and grumble about it, but he'll almost always use his knowledge or abilities to assist any good-aligned character who shows him kindness.

Masuud's great secret is that he was once a high-born ruling elder of the Solaani and one of the leaders in the great struggle to shatter the empire of the lizardfolk. He left his people and rejected a role in polite society because of the guilt he feels over his role in condemning the lizardfolk to extinction (see *Dragon* #282).

Masuud is intended to be an interesting combination of Socrates, Sherlock Holmes, and the Fool from Shakespeare's *King Lear*. If the PCs get on his good side, Masuul's knowledge and capabilities can come in handy in all sorts of ways.

Thalia, Tax Collector

Female Human, 5th-level cleric, "authority"

Strength:	11	Fort Save:	+4
Dexterity:	10	Ref Save:	+1
Constitution:	11	Will Save:	+7
Intelligence:	14	Alignment:	LG
Wisdom:	16	Speed:	30 ft.
Charisma:	13	Armor Class:	14
Hit Points:	28	Flat-footed AC:	14
Melee Attack:	+4	Touch AC:	10

Special: Proficient with simple weapons, all types of armor, and all shields, turn undead, spontaneous casting, Good domain, Knowledge domain.
Skills: Concentration +8, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (law) +10, Spellcraft +10.
Feats: Scribe Scroll, Brew Potion, Toughness.
Languages: Common.
Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork heavy mace, masterwork large wooden shield, *potion of cure light wounds, scroll of endurance, scroll of bull's strength.*
Spells: (5/4+1/4+1/3+1 DC=13 + spell level) 0—*detect magic, detect poison, light, mending, read magic;* 1st—*bless, comprehend languages, detect evil, sanctuary, protection from evil*;* 2nd—*bull's strength, hold person, resist elements, silence, detect thoughts*;* 3rd—*dispel magic, magic vestment, summon monster III, magic circle against evil*.*
*Indicates a domain spell.

Roleplaying Hook
Thaila is stern, authoritarian, and easily annoyed by unnecessary conversation.

Shortly after she established the Valley, Janda found Thaila as an abandoned child in the jungle. Several years later, after she discovered the child's talent for mathematics, Janda made Thaila an apprentice to Uzef, who then served her as the valley's tax keeper. After Uzef died, Thaila inherited his post.

Thaila is something of a workaholic and spends almost all of her time either supervising the tax collection at the Valley's main entrance, inspecting the security arrangements at the treasury, or working with Janda's other bureaucrats to see that the administrative needs of the Valley are being met.

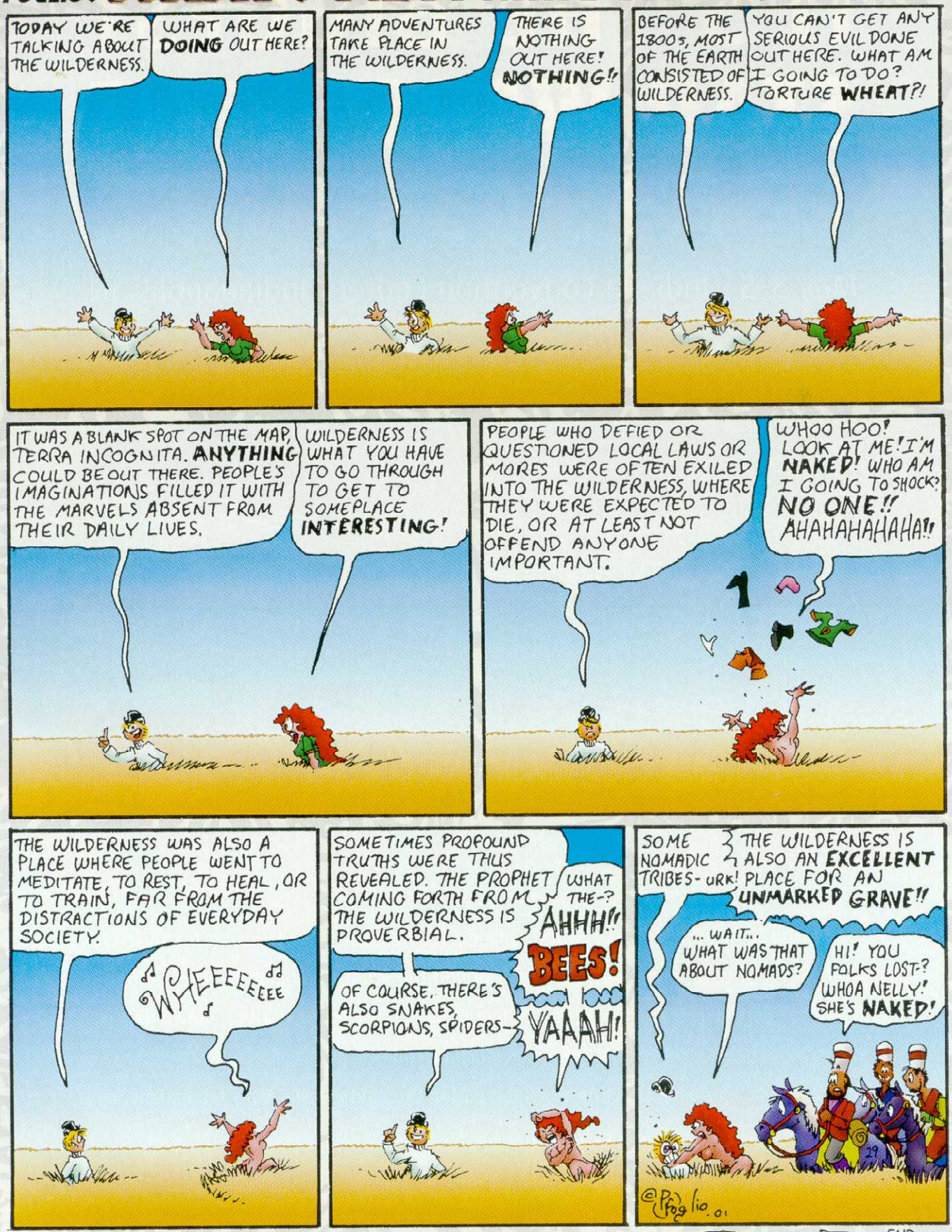
Thaila is beloved by the underclasses who live in the Valley because she has a penchant for aiding the poor and downtrodden. She's always finding ways to divert small sums from the treasury to help the beggars who work the bazaar. Demonstrating the same sort of largess is one of the few ways to attract her attention and gain her friendship.

Thalia long ago "heard the call" and went off into the jungle just outside Janda's Valley to join the priesthood of Abrexis, although she keeps this affiliation a strict secret. Abrexis wants her to remain "undercover" inside the Valley and report on what happens there for reasons not even Thaila understands.

Because she is often supervising the tax collection at the Valley's main gate, the PCs will meet Thalia often and grow to remember her. She provides a convenient NPC whenever a "government authority" needs to show up to advance a plot or deal with player questions.

Look for the biggest "Dungeoncraft" ever next month.

PHIL FOGLIO'S WHAT'S NEW WITH PHIL & DIXIE


TODAY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE WILDERNESS.
WHAT ARE WE DOING OUT HERE?
MANY ADVENTURES TAKE PLACE IN THE WILDERNESS.
THERE IS NOTHING OUT HERE! NOTHING!!
BEFORE THE 1800s, MOST OF THE EARTH CONSISTED OF WILDERNESS.
YOU CAN'T GET ANY SERIOUS EVIL DONE OUT HERE. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? TORTURE WHEAT?!
IT WAS A BLANK SPOT ON THE MAP, TERRA INCOGNITA. ANYTHING COULD BE OUT THERE. PEOPLE'S IMAGINATIONS FILLED IT WITH THE MARVELS ABSENT FROM THEIR DAILY LIVES.
WILDERNESS IS WHAT YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH TO GET TO SOMEPLACE INTERESTING!
PEOPLE WHO DEFIED OR QUESTIONED LOCAL LAWS OR MORES WERE OFTEN EXILED INTO THE WILDERNESS, WHERE THEY WERE EXPECTED TO DIE, OR AT LEAST NOT OFFEND ANYONE IMPORTANT.
WHOO HOO! LOOK AT ME! I'M NAKED! WHO AM I GOING TO SHOCK? NO ONE!! AHAHAHAHAHA!!
THE WILDERNESS WAS ALSO A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE WENT TO MEDITATE, TO REST, TO HEAL, OR TO TRAIN, FAR FROM THE DISTRACTIONS OF EVERYDAY SOCIETY.
WHEEEEEEEE
SOMETIMES PROFOUND TRUTHS WERE THUS REVEALED. THE PROPHET COMING FORTH FROM THE WILDERNESS IS PROVERBIAL.
WHAT THE-?
AHHH!!
BEES!
OF COURSE, THERE'S ALSO SNAKES, SCORPIONS, SPIDERS-
YAAAH!
SOME NOMADIC TRIBES- URK!
THE WILDERNESS IS ALSO AN EXCELLENT PLACE FOR AN UNMARKED GRAVE!!
... WAIT... WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT NOMADS?
HI! YOU FOLKS LOST? WHOA NELLY! SHE'S NAKED!
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GRR
END.

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